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COLLEGES FACING FUNDING FREEZE

Building work halted as Government cash runs out

COLLEGES throughout Kent face financial upheaval after funding for a string of multi-million pound rebuilding projects was pulled from under them.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) had given the green light in principle for work at more than 100 UK colleges to begin – but the Government now says there is not enough cash to go around.

A review has been ordered to decide which colleges need the funding the most, with those in Kent keeping their fingers crossed they will be allowed to stick to schedule.

North West Kent College has already demolished some of the buildings at its Dartford campus, which it plans to replace with a £69 million development, and is housing many of its students in temporary huts.

Thanet College has spent £4m of its own money preparing to relocate to new premises and is concerned the cash may go to waste, while plans to start work at both Canterbury College and South Kent College have also been put on hold.

Kent County Council leader Paul Carter said he hoped the blunder would not have a knock-on effect on other areas of education.

He said: "It looks like the Government is running out of money and the LSC has over-promised in agreeing its allocations.

"I'm hoping the shortage of public money doesn't affect our ambitious secondary schools rebuilding project, but luckily we have been ahead of the game in Kent in securing the capital for the first two phases."

North West Kent College is rebuilding its campuses in Dartford and Gravesend, with the first of two phases at Gravesend complete and paid for.

But about £10m of public money has so far been spent preparing the first phase at Dartford, where building work has now been suspended.

A spokesman admitted that aspects of the project may have to be reconsidered as a result of the funding freeze, such as keeping some of the older buildings originally earmarked for demolition.

Work on a new Thanet College at Westwood was due to begin in August, with more than £77m of the £88m needed to be funded by the Government.

Thanet project director Rob Thrower said: "Our relocation is reliant on approval of the funding from the LSC, so we need some

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

EXCLUSIVE

By **STEVE KNIGHT**


Picture: BBC

Sir Alan's seaside task for his new apprentices

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Kent today



TODAY: After a cloudy start with patchy drizzle, it will become brighter from the north-west. Sunny spells becoming widespread by the afternoon. A moderate north-westerly wind. Max temp 9-12C (48-54F).
TONIGHT: Dry with clear spells and glimpses of the moon. Gentle westerly winds. Min temp 3-6C (37-43F).

Around Britain

		C	F			C	F
Aberdeen	cloudy	13	55	London	fair	11	52
Belfast	fair	13	55	Liverpool	fair	14	57
Birmingham	cloudy	12	54	Manchester	fair	11	52
B'mouth	fair	12	54	Newcastle	fair	13	55
Bristol	fair	11	52	Norwich	fair	13	55
Cardiff	fair	12	54	Oxford	fair	13	55
Cork	fair	13	55	Southsea	fair	13	55
Edinburgh	cloudy	12	54	S'hampton	fair	11	52
Glasgow	cloudy	11	52	Southport	sun	–	–
Isle of Man	fair	11	52	Swansea	fair	11	52
Leeds	fair	11	52	Torquay	fair	12	54

Sun & moon

Sunrise	6.53am	Sunset	6.12pm	Lighting up times
Moonrise	4.16am	Moonset	1.31pm	6.12pm to 6.53am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	(M feet)		(M feet)		(M feet)		(M feet)	
Dover	08.30	5.2	20.48	5.5	09.17	5.6	21.29	5.8
Margate	09.17	3.8	21.24	3.9	10.13	4.1	22.14	4.2
St Mary's	01.50	4.3	14.23	4.3	02.38	4.7	15.04	4.7

Week ahead

monday	Cloudy. Dry.	thursday	Showers.
tuesday	Sunny spells.	friday	Showers, heavy.
wednesday	Sunny spells.	saturday	Showers.

CO_2 pipeline route search under way

E.ON is pushing ahead with Kingsnorth coal plant plans

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

WORK to identify underground pipeline routes for the transport of harmful gas away from Kingsnorth power station has begun.

Despite not yet receiving permission to build its controversial new coal-fired plant on the Hoo Peninsula, German energy giant E.ON has started investigations into how carbon dioxide could best be sent to North Sea storage fields.

The existing station at Kingsnorth is one of several bidding to receive grants from the Government, which is running a competition to decide on a carbon capture and storage (CCS) demonstration plant it will fund.

E.ON's CCS development manager Andy Read said of the pipeline survey: "We have had a number of desktop studies ready for a while but now the competition is progressing we need to move the process along further.

"Initially we'll be looking at things like public rights of way and access before we start talking to landowners, Medway Council and so on."

Earlier this month, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband was criticised for further delaying a decision on whether to allow the new power station at Kingsnorth to be built. The Government was originally going to give its answer following completion of a review into the readiness of CCS technology, but a second consultation on the UK's coal policy has now also been announced.

The Kingsnorth proposals have proved controversial and prompted the Climate Camp protest last August. Campaigners argue the carbon dioxide released by burning coal will cause untold damage to the environment.

Speaking at a conference earlier this week, E.ON chief executive Paul Golby called on the Government to speed up the decision-making process and increase financial support for CCS.

He said: "While we will continue to invest tens of millions in pursuing our CCS development programme, we need to see a similarly vigorous approach to developing the financial incentives that need to be in place if we want to invest faster than the market will dictate.

"We remain committed to the Government's CCS demonstration competition, which is a great start, but what we desperately need now is action. I very much hope to see signs of progress soon, which is why we've decided to push forward with developing options for our own project."

While E.ON was pressing for the Government to approve its power station plans, environmentalists were protesting against them outside the firm's headquarters in Coventry.

Among them was Nasa scientist James Hansen, who warned that allowing new coal-fired plants to be built without CCS technology being fully-developed could contribute to the extinction of millions of species.

Meanwhile, green campaigners were also in attendance at last Sunday's premiere of The Age of Stupid, a film about the effects of climate change. It stars Pete Postlethwaite, who has said he will return his OBE if the Kingsnorth plans are approved.

Stuart Jeffery, Green Party parliamentary candidate for Maidstone and the Weald, was at the event.

He said: "Let's hope the film helps spur people into action. There's very little time left to make the changes required to tackle the climate crisis. I hope politicians across the world take note."

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'Significant issues if this falls through'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

immediate decisions. The college has committed pretty much all its resources, so if we do not get the money then we will have to seek more funding to replace what we have lost.

"There would be significant issues if the project falls through or is delayed, and the governors would have to decide what course of action they would want to take. We will continue to ensure this important project is given the highest priority."

Canterbury College has already completed two phases of its rebuilding work at a cost of £50m and is thought to be waiting on a similar amount before work can begin on its third phase.

Building work at South Kent College's Ashford Learning Campus is also ready to begin, subject to receiving the £30m promised by the LSC.

Responses to an Association of Colleges (AoC) survey from 137 of its members show at least £170m would have to be written off if their capital projects did not get the Government backing they were expecting.

AoC chief executive Martin Doel said: "Colleges must have quick, clear and consistently fair decisions on these projects. These new buildings will benefit students, staff, business and communities across the country.

"These colleges play a central role in helping the country during times of economic difficulty and these delays threaten to destabilise their efforts.

"We encourage the Government to identify where additional funds might be secured to sustain this excellent programme and allow colleges to respond to the needs of business, individuals and communities."

An LSC spokesman said: "We will consult urgently with the AoC and other key sector organisations on proposals and a strategy for prioritisation for future projects. These proposals and the future management of the programme will also reflect the conclusion of Sir Andrew Foster's current review."

West Kent College, which also had its funding for a new build frozen back in December, is one of eight across the country told this week the cash it was promised was safe.

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Sir Alan will ask The Apprentice hopefuls to rebrand resort







Lorraine Tighe



Mona Lewis

SUGAR AND SPICE: Sir Alan, left, will ask The Apprentice contenders – including Kent businesswomen Lorraine Tighe and Mona Lewis – to rebrand seaside town Margate

Clean up this town

CONTENDERS in the new series of hit TV show The Apprentice could find a way to make Bob Geldof's dream come true – by making Margate more appealing, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

And with two Kent women vying to become Sir Alan Sugar's next apprentice, a little inside knowledge might just give them the edge. One of the tasks to be set by electronics millionaire Sir Alan will be to rebrand the seaside town that Live Aid organiser Geldof once called "ugly".

Margate was popular with holidaymakers in decades gone by, but with Dreamland derelict and the Scenic Railway damaged by a fire last year, the town has seen better days.

But Thanet council has said Dreamland and the rollercoaster could rise from the ashes as a heritage fairground.

There are also hopes the Turner Contemporary will draw art lovers to the town when work on the gallery is finished.

The BBC's fifth series of The Apprentice reaches our screens on Wednesday with an all-new line up of would-be business experts hoping to land a job with Sir Alan.

Week after week, the acid-tongued boss sets two teams the same task, with one member of the losing team being told: "You're fired" and sent packing.

Sir Alan said: "We recognise what difficult times we are in, with people considering whether to go on holiday. We thought there was a good opportunity to reinvent one of our seaside towns as one of the tasks."

One possible team leader is Lorraine Tighe, 36, from Kent. She has a NHC in business studies and is a national accounts manager. Mother-of-two Tighe was born in London and left school at 16. Since then she has gone on to be the top sales person in every company she has ever worked for.

She said: "I've fought against all the odds. I'm a single mum with no education and I've had a very hard time. To have the confidence I have, I can be proud of myself."

The other Kent contestant is Mona Lewis, 28, from Sittingbourne, a senior business manager.

Mother-of-one Lewis was born in Karachi and is a former beauty queen.

She said: "I knew I would be selected for The Apprentice. I've succeeded because I work hard and I'm honest."

Faversham resident Geldof ruffled feathers when he branded Margate "ugly" and "scruffy". Writing in a Kent County Council magazine, he said: "It's a mad mystery, the battle of the ugliness of Margate against the charm of the beaches."

But the former Boomtown Rat made it up to Margate by turning on the town's festive lights last Christmas.

North Thanet MP Roger Gale said: "Mr Geldof's comments were made a while ago and he has since said some rather kinder things about Margate."

Thanet council leader Cllr Sandy Ezekiel said: "We'd be delighted to see Margate featuring on The Apprentice – it would be excellent publicity."

• ***Bookies William Hill makes Lorraine Tighe the female favourite to win with a price of 4/1. Mona Lewis is 6/1.***

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If not Margate, try this …

ROYAL Tunbridge Wells is among the top 10 places where Britons most want to go on holiday in the UK.

That's the finding in the latest Which? Holiday magazine, which places the spa town at number eight.

Bowness-on-Windermere in the Lake District came top. With money in short supply, many of us looking at holiday destinations closer to home – and where better to start than in the Garden of England?

"People worried about how much they will get for their money abroad this summer should seriously consider holidaying here in Britain," said a Which? spokesman.

To celebrate British Tourism Week, which starts on Monday, Which? Holiday has drawn together a list of the 10 places in the UK we love to visit.

Magazine editor Lorna Cowan said: "Who needs to go abroad for a break when there is so much on our doorstep? Britain really does offer something for everyone, from beach holidays to city breaks and everything in between."

A study commissioned by Tunbridge Wells council found tourism is worth nearly £200 million a year to the town.

More than four million people visit annually, helping to preserve almost 4,000 jobs – about seven per cent of the borough's total.



GEORGIAN GEM: Royal Tunbridge Wells

Cllr Elizabeth Thomas said: "This shows how important tourism is to Tunbridge Wells. It's one of the largest employment sectors, and helps support businesses of all shapes and sizes dependent on visitors coming to the area and spending money."

Prison break over

A CONVICTED killer who escaped from prison has been found by police at a bed and breakfast in Medway.



Lyndon Coles, pictured right, and his fiancée Nicole McMurray, 33, were arrested at 6pm on Thursday, police said. Coles, 45, escaped from Kirklevington Prison, Cleveland, last weekend, where he was serving a life sentence for the murder of Shane George in Hull in 1994.

He was jailed for a minimum term of 15 years for the murder of Mr George who was shot dead as he opened his door.

Virus closes ward

A WARD was forced to close for more than a week due to an outbreak of the winter vomiting bug at Maidstone Hospital.

The Jonathan Saunders Ward closed to new admissions on March 10 after 12 cases of norovirus infection.

The affected patients on the orthopaedic ward had the virus at different points throughout last week. Cases of Norovirus, which causes diarrhoea and vomiting, are common in winter. Symptoms usually last for 24-48 hours. The ward was partially re-opened on Tuesday.

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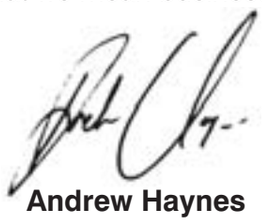
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Another palace visit as Charlie receives a CBE

THE county's fire service chief has been presented with a CBE by Princess Anne at Buckingham Palace.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service's Chief Fire Officer Charlie Hendry was appointed a Commander of the British Empire for services to local government in the New Year Honours List.



REWARDED: Charlie Hendry

The award recognises the work the 48-year-old has undertaken nationally advising on fire and rescue matters and for his service to Kent and Medway.

After picking up the award this week, he said: "It's obviously a tremendous honour and is also a recognition of the outstanding work of our fire and rescue service."

Mr Hendry, who is from Doddington, near Sittingbourne, has enjoyed a long firefighting career.

He joined London Fire Brigade as a firefighter in 1983 where he spent 17 years and attended incidents including the fatal train crash at Wembley in 1984, as well as leading London-wide planning for the Millennium celebrations.

In October, 1999, he also commanded fire and rescue operations at the Paddington Rail Disaster.

The following year he joined KFRS as deputy chief fire officer, spending six years in the post before being promoted to chief fire officer.

He organised the response to 2007's Folkestone earthquake, among other large incidents.

In 2008, Mr Hendry was appointed president of the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA).

He has been on secondment in the role since June last year, but is due to return to the county this summer.

Mr Hendry has been a regular visitor to the palace – he also holds the Queen's Fire Service Medal and the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

Mum's not guilty plea in son killing

THE mother of an 11-year-old boy has pleaded not guilty to his murder.

James Taylor, a pupil at Wilmington Grammar School for Boys was found drowned at his home in New Ash Green, near Dartford.

His mother, Jennifer Taylor, 45, appeared at Maidstone Court Court on Friday, and denied murdering him between November 28 and December 3 last year.

A provisional trial date of June 8 has been set and Taylor was remanded in custody.

Dock roadworks to cause delays

POLICE are warning motorists of possible delays on the A20 in Dover as road improvements begin tomorrow.

The work will last for eight weeks and involves repairs to the central reservation barriers between the Eastern Docks roundabout and the junction with Marine Parade.

There will be single-lane closures in operation during off-peak times between 9.30am-3.30pm each weekday from Monday. Motorists are advised to allow extra time for their journeys and to listen to travel updates.

Co-star mourns for 'fun-loving' Natasha

By **SIMON ROBINSON**
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FILM extra Karol Steele has paid tribute to award-winning actress Natasha Richardson, who died after a skiing accident in Canada.

Mrs Steele worked with the acclaimed stage and screen star who played school headmistress Mrs Kingsley in the hit teen romantic comedy Wild Child, which was partially filmed at Cobham Hall, Cobham, in August, 2007.

The Dover actress said the entire cast and crew had been bowled over by the leading lady's down-to-earth nature.

She said: "I found Natasha to be friendly, approachable and fun-loving.

"During the times in-between takes on the set she would sit in the crew tent enjoying a cup of coffee and a boxed meal exactly the same as the rest of us. She was so relaxed on set and made everyone feel like one big family.

"I loved chatting to her and felt just as an important part of the film we were making as she was. She was also happy to pose for photographs and sign autographs for the teenagers on set, who knew and admired her for her work on the remake of The Parent Trap."

Tribute

Mrs Steele sent her condolences to Richardson's husband, the actor Liam Neeson, who she met during filming, and their two sons.

She said: "All my love and deepest sympathies go to her husband and their children in this difficult time. Her eldest son is roughly the same age as my son.

"To think that she won't see her sons grow up just breaks my heart thinking about it."

Richardson passed away in New York on Wednesday, after suffering severe head injuries in a skiing accident in Quebec's Station Mont Tremblant resort.

A host of celebrity A-listers paid personal tribute to the popular star, while Broadway marked her tragic death by dimming their lights on Thursday.

The 45-year-old was the daughter of actress Vanessa Redgrave and director/producer Tony Richardson and the elder sister of actress Joely Richardson.

During a distinguished stage career she won the Tony award for her performance as Sally Bowles in the 1998 Broadway revival of Cabaret. Her notable film roles include Nell, The Parent Trap and Maid in Manhattan.





MEMORIES: Natasha Richardson (right) poses with Karol during filming of Wild Child in 2007

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Ian Shaw performs at the opening of Quarterhouse, Folkestone's new music and performing arts venue



City gives the thumbs up to new Marlowe costing £25m

THE stage is set for the new Marlowe Theatre after councillors voted in favour of rebuilding the iconic venue in the largest, most expensive single project Canterbury City Council has ever undertaken, ***writes Gareth Arnold***.

Speaking after the meeting on Thursday evening, theatre director Mark Everett underlined the significance of the decision.

He said: "It's a historic moment. This is a decision that will have a impact on the city for the next 40 or 50 years. Last time they converted an old cinema – this is a new theatre that will last for generations."

Council leader John Gilbey reassured members the local authority could afford the £25 million project.

He said: "It is a decision about Canterbury, it is about the district, and it is about Kent and the region as a whole. It is a council-defining decision. The new Marlowe will be the ship that leads the way through this difficult time we face."

Brand

Cllr Hazel McCabe, one of only two councillors who voted against the proposal, said: "The impact this theatre will have on the revenue budget is unacceptable in this very uncertain economic time."

But many said letting the Marlowe die was simply not an option.

Cllr Michael Dixey said: "Canterbury relies on tourism. If Canterbury was a brand it would be worth billions. If this new theatre does not go ahead it would damage that brand terribly. We must go ahead."

Canterbury council will pay an estimated £17m towards the project. Kent County Council has agreed a grant of £2m and a further loan of up to £2m if needed.

And the South East England Development Agency has approved a £1.95m grant, while a public fundraising campaign has so far raised more than £1m of its £6m target.

The final curtain falls at the Marlowe tonight, following the Night of a Thousand Stars performance.

• ***See Review magazine for a look back at the history of the Marlowe.***

Gruesome campaign aims at educating those new to the roads

Safety message to young drivers in video nasties



SHOCKING new driving videos that could be upsetting for some people are being shown to youngsters around the county, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

With warnings that some of the hard-hitting images may be disturbing, they are being screened in clubs, cinemas, town centres and known hangouts.

They graphically show the results of poor driving for whatever reason, be it drinking, speeding or just being plain stupid.

They are aimed at young drivers, who are more likely to be involved in crashes because of their relative inexperience.

One of the films was so gruesome the internet video-sharing website YouTube banned it.

The campaign is the brainchild of the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership which was started seven years ago, and consists of representatives from Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Police, the Highways Agency and the courts service.

The partnership is viewed as controversial by some because it responsible for speed cameras in the county.

The organisation said it wanted to make quite clear to young drivers the consequences their actions behind the wheel can have, not only for themselves, but for everyone else involved in an accident.

Those effects can sometimes stretch for years as injured victims battle to recover.

And the officials make the point it is not only those hurt who are affected – it's also gruelling for those in the medical and care sectors who have to assist with that recovery.



HARD LESSON: Young motorists are played the graphic videos

The group said its research found young drivers felt the worst possible consequence of driving irresponsibly was to kill or injure someone else, particularly a child. And they have good cause to be worried.

A staggering 20 per cent of new drivers crash in their first year and 16 per cent more drivers aged 16-19 are killed now, compared with 15 years ago.

Impact

Staying out of trouble on the roads will pay off for the young driver, too. If they rack up just six points on their licence in their first two years on the road, they are banned and need to take another test.

And six points is just two speeding offences.

In Kent, 17-24 year olds were responsible for 20 per cent of all deaths and a quarter of all serious injuries on our roads in 2007.

Young men come off worst – 89 per cent of the deaths and 79 per cent of the seriously injured casualties were male.

Katherine Barrett, communications officer for the partnership, said: "The impacts of a car crash can be far-reaching and we hope this activity will making people think about what they could be responsible for and how their lives could be changed before they get behind the wheel."

The adverts are part of the 'Grow up. Slow down' campaign.

For more information, visit www.kmscp.org/gusd, and you can order a free copy of 1stCar magazine.

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This weeks
Homes and Gardens
starts on page 35
Kentish Saturday Observer KENT ON SUNDAY

‘Be alert to the terror threat’

Police want you to report suspicious activity

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

ICONIC locations such as Bluewater make Kent a prime target for terrorist attacks, warns a high-ranking police officer.

Assistant Chief Constable Gary Beautridge said that while he felt the county was a safe place to live in, its residents needed to stay alert to prevent any future atrocities.

Speaking just days after two soldiers and a policeman were killed by terrorists in Northern Ireland, ACC Beautridge told KOS Media he felt there was a “very real probability” of further attacks in the UK.

He added: “It’s difficult to say if something will happen in Kent but we do have iconic sites and locations that, if targeted, would have a devastating impact on the community and people’s confidence.

“Yes, there have been attacks, but there have also been a great deal of interceptions, too. Therefore, I don’t think people should walk around being worried every day, but they do need to be vigilant to help us ensure nothing does happen. They should not be fooled into thinking terror attacks will only happen in London, Birmingham or Glasgow.”

In 2007, five men were sentenced to a life behind bars after being found guilty of planning to bomb Bluewater in Greenhithe – one of the largest shopping centres in Europe.



Picture: KNP

TERROR WARNING: The July 7 London attacks are just one of many reminders terrorism is a threat

Members of the public foiled the plot after alerting police when they discovered a large amount of ammonium nitrate being kept at a storage unit in west London. Had they not, the lives of thousands of Kent shoppers could have been lost.

This week the Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo) has been highlighting its anti-terrorist hotline – 0800 789321 – and reminding people to report suspected terrorism rather than rely on others to do so.

ACC Beautridge said: “I think there is a lot of concern about terrorism among communities because it’s not something you only see elsewhere in the world, as the recent murders in Northern Ireland and the July 7 London bombings have shown. This is why everyone needs to remain vigilant because we can’t afford to sit back and pretend we are not at risk.

“Kent is an exceptionally safe place in which to live and work but we do need to be on our guard.”

The Government’s national counter-terrorism strategy, Contest, which is split into four agendas – prevent, pursue, protect and prepare.

ACC Beautridge said his officers worked closely with communities in Kent to ensure the risk of attacks to its people was as low as possible.

He said: “These terrifying acts are caused by people who are part of the community so we have to engage with all elements of society and will continue to do so to help us understand the level of threat.”

ACC Beautridge said that “suspicious activity” can include someone owning a large number of mobile phones or passports, noticeably behaving differently or taking an interest in security, such as CCTV, for no good reason.

Other possible indicators could be someone buying or storing large volumes of chemicals or travelling for long periods while remaining vague about their destination.

Information given to officers via the hotline is treated as confidential, and you do not have to give your name.

ACC Beautridge said of the Acpo campaign: “There will be posters and leaflets displaying the hotline number distributed throughout the county by our neighbourhood policing teams, as well as radio adverts.

“We hope people do not rely on others but trust their instincts and report any suspicious behaviour.”

• ***The hotline number is 0800 789321.***







Campaign highlights chlamydia screening

NHS West Kent is launching a chlamydia screening campaign for young people.

The campaign will raise awareness about the consequences of unprotected sex and point young people to a range of screening services.

Postcards are being sent out inviting 20 to 24-year-olds to attend screening at: Maidstone: Maidstone Health, 48 Church Street, Mon-Fri, 8.30am-6pm, Sat 8.30am-12.30pm; Dartford: St Edmunds Church Living Well, St Edmunds Road, Temple Hill, (March 24, 4-8pm); Swanley: The Harvey Centre, St Mary's Road, (March 25, 4-8pm); and Gravesend: The Grand, 43 New Road, (March 26, 4-8pm).

Try Angle Awards recognise the young

NOMINATIONS are being sought for the 15th annual Try Angle Awards which recognise the efforts and achievements of Kent youngsters.

Youngsters aged 11-18 are eligible to be nominated for their achievements in voluntary work, arts and music, citizenship, environmental work, personal development, sport or outdoor activity, bravery and being a good friend or young carer.

Nomination forms are available from schools, youth centres and area youth offices or by emailing bill.butler@kent.gov.uk. The deadline for nominations is Thursday, April 30.

POLICE are appealing for information after the theft of a postage stamp collection from the Landmark Centre in Deal.

The stamps, which are from New Zealand and date from the 1850s to the 1950s, were taken on Saturday, March 7, between 10am-1pm.

Anyone with information is asked to phone PC Andy Wallis on 01304 240055 or Kent Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

County is still in the loop for Crossrail link



HELLO: Geoff Hoon with Dr Howard Stoate

TRANSPORT Secretary Geoff Hoon has offered the prospect of extending the £15.9 billion Crossrail project to Kent.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

Current plans for the new 74-mile network see it running from Maidenhead in Berkshire to Abbey Wood in London and Shenfield in Essex, with stops throughout the capital including at Heathrow.

But during a visit to Ebbsfleet International station on Tuesday, Mr Hoon said he thought the line could be extended to parts of north Kent in the future.

He said: "Dr Howard Stoate (the Dartford Labour MP) has pressed me hard on the question of Crossrail and the extension to Ebbsfleet. We have preserved the route and made it a possibility and I'm certainly not ruling it out."

Crossrail is the UK's biggest transport project since the Channel Tunnel and work on the line is expected to begin next year, with the first trains due to be running by 2017.

Dr Stoate said he invited Mr Hoon to visit Ebbsfleet because he believed the economic and environmental case for extending the service to Kent was now "overwhelming".

His view was supported by Kent Thameside Regeneration Partnership chairman Kevin Lynes, who said an enlarged scheme would give regeneration plans in the area a boost.

Mr Lynes added: "The high-speed rail link is already bringing tremendous focus to Kent Thameside and we aim to deliver more than 25,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs in the area. Joining up Dartford with Crossrail would be an added boost for the regeneration of north Kent by establishing a direct rail link between Ebbsfleet, Docklands, the City of London and Heathrow.

Privatisation

"This will be an added incentive in persuading businesses to locate to Kent Thameside and create additional job opportunities for local people."

During his visit to Ebbsfleet, Mr Hoon also viewed plans for two new domestic rail platforms as well as for a 9,000-space park-and-ride facility. Both are due to open in December.

However, his tour of the station was gatecrashed by Liberal Democrat activist James Willis, who handed Mr Hoon a petition signed by 400 people angry at recent high fare increases.

Mr Willis said: "Local Lib Dems are backing the vision to bring Crossrail to north Kent, but it is just as important to document how existing commuters feel about their service in the many years before the domestic advantages Crossrail could bring.

"Commuters across Dartford and Gravesham are angry and insulted that because of privatisation we have had triple-inflation fare increases forced upon us in this economic climate.

"It is also scandalous that commuters in north Kent stations such as Swanscombe and Greenhithe will see little or no benefit from the new high-speed rail link, but are still being asked to pay so much more for effectively a second-rate service."

Meanwhile, Mr Hoon also announced on Tuesday that he would consider suspending the Dartford tolls for a month to see the effect it would have on pollution and congestion.

Spring Savings

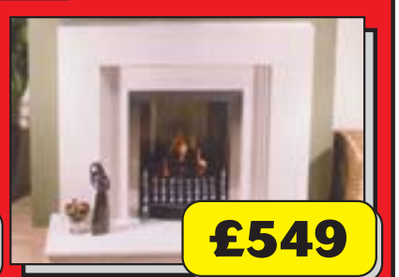


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Shameful delay must end, say Gurkha justice campaigners

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

HIGH Court judges will decide on Wednesday if the Government should be hurried into announcing a new immigration policy for retired Gurkha soldiers.

The system of allowing only those who retired after 1997 to remain in the UK was deemed unlawful at a hearing in September, when the Home Office was given three months to come up with new rules.

However, almost six months later an amended policy has still not been announced.

Actress Joanna Lumley led former Gurkhas to the High Court in London on Tuesday, when solicitors lodged papers calling for an injunction to force the issue.

The Absolutely Fabulous sitcom star, whose father fought alongside Nepalese soldiers during World War Two, is the public face of the Gurkha Justice Campaign.

She said: "The way successive governments have treated Gurkhas who retired before 1997 is truly offensive and a stain on our national character.

"These are men who have served in the British Army, sometimes for 20 years or more. Some have won our country's highest honours for valour and service, yet the Government claims they do not have a strong enough link with the UK to have the right to live here with us in the land they have defended with such loyalty.



SMILING THROUGH: British Army Gurkhas are still awaiting a new Home Office policy

"The almost spiritual reaction to our campaign shows beyond doubt that the Gurkhas are loved and will be welcomed by the people of Britain."

Shorncliffe Barracks in Folkestone is home to the 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, while nearly half the soldiers from the Maidstone-based 36 Engineers Regiment are Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

The Government's position before last year's ruling was that those discharged before 1997 – when the regiment moved its main base from Hong Kong to the UK – were unlikely to have strong residential ties in this country.

That meant those who wanted to settle in the UK had to apply for British citizenship and could be refused and deported.

Shepway councillor Peter Carroll, who is a member of the Gurkha Justice Campaign, described the situation as "shameful".

He said: "Elderly Gurkha veterans are dying while they wait for the Government to announce its new policy. Thousands of other Gurkhas are being forced to live in poverty because they are forbidden to work.

"Last year more than 250,000 people signed our petition within six weeks, calling on the Government to allow all British Army retired Gurkhas the right to live in Britain.

"It is shameful that the Government is yet again delaying and playing for time."

A Home Office spokesman said the revised policy was under consideration and would be announced "as soon as possible".

He added: "We are determined to get the guidance right to ensure it is fair to all Gurkhas."

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Online MOMM knows best, so pamper her …

MORE mothers in Kent are turning to the internet to come up with ways of diagnosing family ailments.

And they are making friends at the same time, according to a new survey.

A report from Virgin Media found long waits for doctors' appointments is forcing more and more mums to the web to search for help.

To mark Mother's Day, researchers quizzed mums across the county and found 47 per cent have diagnosed or researched a family health issue online. And 28 per cent use social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter as a way to discuss family issues and get reassurance from other mums.

Chatting

Plus 66 per cent of Kent mums regularly turn to blogs and social networking sites as an essential part of their daily routines.

This new phenomenon, known as MOMMs or Mums Online Making Mates, shows a trend suggesting the mother and toddler morning may be a thing of the past, with 18 per cent of Kent mums now discussing parenting issues online and 12 per cent chatting regularly to mums they've never met in person.

Psychologist Donna Dawson said: "Many mothers don't want a long wait in a doctor's surgery and prefer to use the internet for guidance when self-diagnosing a medical problem.

"The internet allows women to reach out to other mums, share their experiences and ask for advice and support, creating a virtual world of like-minded people. It has replaced the phone and the post for many busy mums."



Tip-off shuts brothel

A BROTHEL has been shut down by police after tip-offs from Strood residents.

Officers launched an investigation into the Kitchener Road property after receiving complaints from neigbours.

Police swooped on the address earlier this month, arresting two women.

A 37-year-old was charged with running a brothel and being in possession of a class B drug. The other woman was released without charge.

Chief Inspector Dave Coleman said: "Brothels such as this are not common in Medway but when we are made aware of their presence, communities can be confident that we will take action to stop the illegal use of houses in this way."

Fears farming is being put out to pasture



MOO-VING ON: Thousands of dairy farmers have quit over the past 10 years

DAIRY farmers say the industry in Kent is dwindling because young people are not prepared to get their hands dirty.

The number of farms producing milk, butter and cheese in the UK has fallen dramatically over the past 20 years and there are concerns the trend will never be reversed due to a lack of interest in entering the profession.

Falling milk prices coupled with rising production costs have made it a difficult time to be a dairy farmer, although some in Kent say the industry still has a bright future as long as there are people willing to work in it.

Romney Marsh farmer Steve Furnival said: "There are guys who are retiring all the time but the problem is the younger generation are not interested in the commitment of the job. They don't want to get up early and work hard all day.

"I think there are about 35 or 40 farms left in Kent, but that's about half the number it was 20 years ago. The economics of being a dairy farmer have been poor for at least the last 10 years but we are going to soldier on anyway.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

"You don't hear of many people starting up new farms, they only seem to be going out. The ones that are left tend to expand or become more efficient through better feeding or breeding techniques."

According to figures released this week by the Conservatives, almost 15,000 farmers have quit the dairy industry since 1997 – equivalent to 26 a week.

South East MEP Richard Ashworth, who lives in Folkestone and was a dairy farmer between 1970 and 2001, said it was an expensive business to run.

He said: "The investment costs of setting up a modern-day dairy are huge and the smaller farms have fallen by the wayside over the years.

"One of the biggest costs is haulage because you have to ship big weights of relatively low-value milk at least every other day.

"Young people perhaps look at how hard people work on farms and how much money they would need to invest and think there must be an easier way of life. However, 30 years ago I took the decision to start my own farm and loved every minute of it.

"The dairy industry does have a future in Kent and across the country because the demand for dairy products will always be high. There will be ups and downs so there needs to be top-class production standards, and if there are then I think the future will be bright."

Dairy farmer Peter Joules, based in Brabourne, near Ashford, said it was important to promote the benefits of the industry to young people.

He said: "It's not easy being a dairy farmer but it is a fantastic and rewarding way of life. I'm not stuck in an office on a sunny day; I'm out in the field enjoying the weather.

"A combination of things has caused a lot of people to get out of the industry over the last 10 years, but I shall still be here in 20 years' time and my 23-year-old son is also in the business now too.

"I think dairy farming in Kent has a reasonably good future. We just need a little bit more stability rather than volatility."

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Sculpture hurdle facing motorists

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

DRIVERS gazing at the giant horse sculpture planned for Kent's countryside will end up crashing their cars, an insurance company has warned.

Just glancing at something not on the road can be distracting, but looking at famous landmarks close to British roads leads to four million incidents every year in the UK, including accidents and near-misses say insurers.

Now company esure is warning motorists that seeing something as eye-catching as the Angel of the South equine will lead to disasters.

But the team behind the £2 million iconic sculpture have dismissed the claims, saying the insurer is just riding on the back of the horse to gain publicity for itself.

The giant 160ft horse is the work of former Turner Prize winner Mark Wallinger and will be built at Springhead Park in Swanscombe. It will be as tall as Nelson's Column.

In the esure poll some 66 per cent of drivers quizzed confessed to being distracted by roadside landmarks and have often taken their eyes off the road to glance at the attractions.

The research revealed Stonehenge in Wiltshire gets the most heads turning as it topped the poll, with Antony Gormley's Angel of the North coming a close second – particularly worrying as it is seen by an estimated 90,000 people every day.

And 28 per cent have had to brake suddenly when driving past a landmark – which could easily lead to a serious road incident.



LOOK AWAY: Insurers fear Mark Wallinger's horse will be a dangerous distraction for road users following a poll about landmarks across Britain

More than half said they slow down when passing roadside landmarks so that they can see the sights while driving. And 63 per cent confessed passengers had encouraged them to take their eyes off the road to look.

Researchers found 47 per cent want Kent's white horse hidden from the view of drivers because it will be too distracting.

Warnings

Some 49 per cent went as far as saying there should be warning signs on the approaches telling drivers to keep their eyes on the road.

A further 47 per cent said speed limits should be lower around roadside landmarks.

Almost three quarters said viewing areas should be introduced at the sculpture site to allow drivers to gawp safely. But while the majority think that's a great idea, a third of drivers said they wouldn't bother stopping, but would still look.

Mike Pickard, head of risk and underwriting at esure, said: "Spotting famous landmarks has long been a fun part of road trips, but this can also lead drivers to distraction as they take their eyes away from the road, slow down or brake suddenly.

"Motorists should keep their eyes on the road at all times – taking them off the road ahead even for a split second, could be dangerous.

"If motorists want to look at a landmark or take a photo, they should pull into a lay-by when it is safe to do so or wait until they are not the ones in the driving seat."

The white horse was selected by Ebbsfleet Landmark Project from a shortlist of three contenders. The planning process is expected to take a year.

Ebbsfleet Landmark Project spokesman Ben Ruse said: "I am not surprised, that given the popularity of the horse and the publicity it has received, companies are keen to ride on the back of it.

"As part of preparing the brief we consulted with the Highway Agency, who had an input on the dimensions and location of the horse.

"Furthermore, this is precisely the sort of safety check that will form a central part of the planning process.

"We would not saddle drivers with anything that would be dangerous."

Fined for drunk slap

ALCOHOLIC Samuel Campbell got annoyed when a woman at Canterbury Open Centre kept pestering him for cigarettes – so he slapped her.

Campbell, 52, of Chelmer Road, Chatham, admitted assaulting Ruth Gee at the centre in Station Road East on October 6 last year at Canterbury Magistrates Court.

He also admitted not answering his bail.

Theresa Ruiz, prosecuting, said Miss Gee was sitting outside the centre and kept demanding cigarettes.

Campbell got so annoyed he put his coat over her head and slapped her on the side.

She called police and he was arrested.

Paul Goldspring, defending, said Campbell didn't injure Miss Gee he was just annoyed. He said his client's drink problem was so bad he had advanced pancreatis, kidney and liver damage.

Mr Goldspring admitted Campbell had an appalling record but it didn't include violence.

He said: "Miss Gee was being a bit of a nuisance and my client had had enough. She was at him continually and he got annoyed and pushed her away."

Campbell was fined £60, ordered to pay Miss Gee £20 compensation plus £60 costs and £15 victim surcharge.

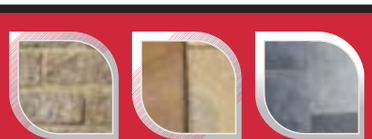
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TOUGH: Soldier put through his paces

Army left breathless by student's findings



Thomas McGlone

SOLDIERS need to be fighting fit no matter what the conditions, even at high altitude, yet little research has been done on the subject until now, thanks to a Kent student.

By **CHRIS MURPHY**

Thomas McGlone served in the Royal Engineers for four years from 2001, based at London's Brompton Barracks and spent time in Germany. Now he is in his final year at the University of Kent.

He wanted to know just what happened to a soldier's breathing and ability to continue to carry out his duties while pushed to the extreme on a mountain.

The exhausting research is part of his last-year studies in the subject of sports science and will be useful to the military sending troops to harsh climates in Afghanistan.

Mr McGlone, 25, is a sports therapy, health and fitness student at the Medway campus.

As part of his dissertation, he is putting the soldiers through gruelling tests to mimic being in high altitude with reduced oxygen levels. He then assesses their physical performance with the added stress of oxygen deprivation typically found in a mountain warfare scenario.

The soldiers volunteering to take part in the research project are from the Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME) in Chatham Maritime, close to the university campus.

The RSME trains Royal Engineers as specialists in combat and construction engineering for the British Army and the troops know how to operate under stressful conditions, but not always while having their breath taken away.

The soldiers' physical test involved running on a treadmill in full combat uniform, while carrying a 42-pound pack and wearing a mask which limits the supply of oxygen to exacting standards. The test pushes the human body to the extremes of what it can endure.

This allows Mr McGlone to create breathing conditions similar to those encountered in mountains, up to a height of 3,500 metres.

The research was carried out within the state-of-the-art sports and human performance testing laboratory at the university's centre for sports studies.

Mr McGlone said he hoped his research project would bring benefits to any soldiers likely to be facing a period of altitude acclimatisation, particularly in the mountains of Afghanistan.

He said: "The soldiers who have volunteered have been very receptive and described it as a useful addition to the training they'll undertake once overseas."

Steve Meadows, a lecturer for the centre for sports studies, helped supervise the project.

He said the research work was impressive, and added: "Thomas's research ideas are innovative, and I'm impressed that he is applying his sporting knowledge to other areas – in this case, the preparation for military campaigns.

"I know he will be delighted to pass on the results of his research to the Army."

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Domestic abuse behind Genny's crusade to aid single parents



BRAVE: Genny Jones was victim of domestic violence

A MOTHER-OF-TWO who was once the victim of domestic violence is on a mission to reach out to other lone parents in Kent, ***writes Anna White***.

Genny Jones, 47, divorced her husband of six years in 2003 after he became physically and mentally abusive towards her.

At the time she had just been made redundant from her job, her house was about to be repossessed and she faced being a single parent to her two sons.

Ms Jones said: "I didn't finally realise I had to leave my husband until a police officer came to the house and said I might not be here next time she came round.

"I thought 'if anything happened to me who would look after my children?, who were aged three and five at the time. So I left."

Ms Jones, who is originally from Sierra Leone and moved to England in 1976, turned to life-coaching classes to help her adjust to being a single parent.

About five years ago she became a trainer for the charity for lone parents, Gingerbread. The inspirational mum, who lives in Gravesend, was also recently chosen to represent Gingerbread on the BBC programme Lifeline alongside singer Jamelia, which was aired on January 18.

To reach more people who have recently become a single parent or been affected by domestic violence, Ms Jones has started to host her own seminars and has one coming up in Gravesend at the end of the month.

Empower

Ms Jones said: "This event is to celebrate and empower lone parents. I have seen many people come to my previous seminars with no self-esteem and they build confidence and find strength and comfort in talking to others.

"My mission is to create a regular support group for both men and women so if they have a bad turn they can know help is there. I always say 'you can't do it on your own, but together we can'."

She is currently in talks to launch a regular support group in Gravesend and another in Maidstone.

Ms Jones' Lone Parents Can seminar will be held at the Riverside Centre, in Dickens Road, on Saturday, March 28.

At the event a mother who raised her son as a lone parent will give a talk and her son will describe what the experience was like for him.

Ms Jones added: "The seminar will be a relaxed environment and just give people in the same boat a chance to share their experiences."

There is a £5 fee which will go towards the cost for the venue.

For more information and to register call Ms Jones on 08450 568566 or email gennyjones61@hotmail.com.

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Communities owe a debt of gratitude to volunteer workforce

By **CHRIS MURPHY**

A QUARTER of the county's residents do voluntary work to serve their community, according to the latest research.

The new Volunteering Index has been compiled by survey company YouGov which found 27 per cent of residents in the South East help out others where and when they can.

The army of unsung heroes in Kent do their community a service at least once a month, it was discovered.

The index was commissioned by the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to uncover a profile of the nation's volunteering habits.

Reinforcing the belief most people have no idea this of the level of unpaid work going on, researchers found 58 per cent believe voluntary groups are not acknowledged enough publicly for the outstanding work they do.

The findings emerge as the 2010 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service launches its call for nominations of the very best volunteers in Kent.

They could then be in line for the highest honour that can be bestowed on groups giving their time freely for the benefit of others.

Members of the public can nominate groups that have been working for the benefit of others for more than three years, as long as more than half its members are volunteers.

In the six years since it was created by the Queen as a national honour to mark the her Golden Jubilee in 2002, more than 600 groups around the UK have won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.



SALUTE: Allan Willett

Mosaic

The Lord Lieutenant, Allan Willett CMG, the Queen's representative in Kent, has long admired the valuable work done by voluntary groups for the benefit of the county's mosaic of communities – and celebrating community cohesion is this year's main lieutenancy theme.

He said: "I have the greatest admiration for the excellent work our many hundreds of voluntary organisations are doing for the communities of Kent and am keen that the dedication and effort of these public-spirited people is properly recognised.

"There are great rewards to be had from volunteering, whether in terms of personal achievement and the development of new skills or a deeper connection with your local community, but it's clear from the research that many in Kent believe, like me, that those whose tireless efforts benefit others deserve wider public recognition."

For more information on the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and how to nominate a group, visit www.queensaward-voluntary.gov.uk.

Promise of more frequent trains

TUNBRIDGE Wells Tory MP Greg Clark has welcomed news that work is to begin next month on a 'rail turnback siding' outside the spa town station that will enable longer trains and more frequent rail services.

Mr Clark said: "Over the past year, we have had to put up with overcrowding, increased costs and chaos caused by bad weather.

"Here, at last, is some good news for all of us who use our local rail services.

"The turnback facility will allow 12-car trains to terminate and turn around at Tunbridge Wells station and will herald a new 'clockface timetable' later this year with longer and more frequent trains at the same time each hour."

Work starts in April and due to be completed by the end of the year.

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Negativity not on agenda for social workers



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Social workers Richard Munn and Anna Ramsay

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

SINCE news of the shocking Baby P scandal was made public last year, all eyes have been focused firmly on the UK's social-work sector.

Partly due to the negligence of a handful of people at Haringey council, a 17-month-old boy was allowed to die and an entire profession was opened up to scrutiny as a result.

Yet despite finding themselves placed in the national spotlight, social workers in Kent say the public are still supportive of them for the help they provide to vulnerable adults as well as children.

Speaking as part of World Social Work Day this week, two social workers for adults said any negative responses they receive do not generally last.

Anna Ramsay, 33, is a senior practitioner for mental health in older people in Maidstone.

She said: "Sometimes social workers are labelled and people have their own opinions of what we are like before we've even arrived, but generally people are very pleased to see us.

"It's not the reality that we visit people because we want to take them away. We visit them because we want to help them and do things that will improve their lives.

"Although anybody can refer us to people they believe need our help, it's usually a relative, friend, neighbour or even the person themselves, so most people obviously realise we have their best interests at heart."

Richard Munn, leader of the Maidstone adult assessment team, agreed with his colleague.

He said: "We are received quite well by the public. Any concerns people might have about us are usually washed away by the time we have finished what we are there for.

"We have a very good relationship with our fellow professionals and everyone is aware of their responsibilities. That will never change."



TRAGEDY: Little Baby P

Last week, Kent County Council chief executive Peter Gilroy told Kent on Sunday he was concerned at the amount of red tape children's social workers had to cut their way through on a daily basis.

But Mrs Ramsay said dealing with paperwork was all part of the job.

She explained: "We work very hard to streamline bureaucracy and be as efficient as possible. We have lots of systems in place to help us do this because we don't want to be filling in forms any more than we have to.

"However, we come into people's lives at a time of crisis for them so it's only right that we are held to account in certain situations.

"When that happens, it's important we have the necessary paperwork in place."

A concern among many following the Baby P scandal was the social work sector would experience difficulties in attracting new recruits who may be put off by the negativity surrounding the profession.

However, Mr Munn said there was no reason why anyone should be put off.

He said: "I do some work with university students, but we'll only know if the numbers go down when the new term starts later this year. What I can say is that we've had more young people entering the profession than ever before thanks to the new social work qualifications. The majority of the work we do as social workers is actually quite rewarding. Every day we help make a positive difference to people's lives."

Mrs Ramsay added: "It's a really privileged job. No two days are the same and you get the chance to meet so many different people. You really feel like you've helped make a difference."

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MAN ON A MISSION: Fast-rising celebrity chef Richard Phillips has endorsed our campaign

'The quality of local produce has rocketed'



CHRIS BRITCHER
CAMPAIGN EDITOR
chris.britcher@kosmedia.co.uk

He is a rising star on the small screen and now celebrity chef and restaurateur Richard Phillips, who runs eateries in Tenterden, Tunbridge Wells and Aylesford, has thrown his weight behind our Kent produced food and drink campaign

THE humble TV cookery programme has come a long way over the past decade.

Where once Delia Smith dominated with sensible, subdued, culinary expertise, now on the menu is an ever-changing feast showcasing an ever-expanding breed of celebrity chefs.

And on their shoulders is carried a mighty responsibility, for they have the power to influence our shopping habits like few others.

So it is heartening to see a growing trend to sing from upon high the praises of locally produced food and drink.

Even more heartening when you see them practice what they preach in their very own restaurants; and one man driving that forward is a famous face happy to throw his weight behind KOS Media's 2009 campaign to encourage our readers to demand locally-produced and sourced food and drink.

There is perhaps nowhere more stereotypically Kentish as the towns of Tunbridge Wells and Tenterden. Both carry a grandeur and desirability which knocks neighbouring settlements into the proverbial cocked hat.

Little wonder then that chef Richard Phillips has selected both as a base for two or his three restaurants in the county.

At just 37 he is a regular on the likes of the BBC's Ready Steady Cook and Step Up to The Plate, as well as ITV's Too Many Cooks.

He is a hot property at cooking's top table... and his age belies a remarkable 20-year career which started with a childhood raised in the Medway towns.

It took him on a trip to Broadstairs and catering college when he turned 16, before putting its foot down to the bright lights of London.

He trained under the Roux brothers, becoming the youngest commis chef at Le Gavroche. He then moved on and up, becoming Marco Pierre White's head chef for six years, in the process opening seven of the culinary legend's restaurants.

In 2001 he decided to branch out on his own, and heralded his return to Kent with the opening of Thackeray's in Tunbridge Wells (opened in the Royal spa town's oldest building, dating back to 1660).

Since then The Hengist in Aylesford has been



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added to his ranks, and, most recently, his latest venture in Tenterden – and the first to take his name.

Richard Phillips at Chapel Down is to be found nestling in the heart of the rolling hills of Small Hythe and as you sit at one of its solid wooden tables you over look the Chapel Down Vineyard.

In person Phillips is exactly how you would imagine a successful and hugely ambitious chef-turned-businessman.

He is dressed impeccably and expensively. He has the swagger of a man who doesn't suffer fools gladly. You can imagine being captivated when he turns on the charm and probably a trifle frightened if you cross him.

He is also thoroughly committed to sourcing local produce for his restaurants.

"Local producers have upped their game over recent years," he explains, as he reclines at a table in the 'barrel room' of his Tenterden restaurant; a private dining area which provides a door opening directly onto the kitchens, should you like to see, hear and smell the hustle and bustle of food preparations.

"Years ago supermarkets would swallow them up, but then spit them out too. I think local producers decided enough was enough and have been more creative; looking for other places to sell their produce.

"As a result the quality has rocketed."

He says during the winter months his menu will be 25-40 per cent Kent produce rising up to anything up to 75 per cent during the peak summer months.

He's disarmingly honest, too. He will not just put Kent-grown goods on his menu for the sake of fashion – he demands the very best from his suppliers and will not hesitate to look elsewhere if he feels his customers may question his judgement or if he's not getting genuine value for money.

Fortunately, he's mighty impressed by what our local producers are achieving.

"There is no-one who flies the flag for Kent more than me. I always try to source as much as I can locally and use local people as much as I can.

"If we can put money in local producers' pockets, they will invest in their farms; and if their farms get bigger and better, they produce a better product.

"I wish all the producers success."

And this is, after all, a man who knows his stuff. His knowledge of fishing and farming methods is fascinating, as are the way he sources his food (one fisherman texts him at 1am from his boat to tell him what the catch of the day is and does he want it... hours later they are cooking it and serving it up to hungry customers).

He explains: "If you buy local, you're buying in-season food – and if you buy in-season it's going to be cheaper. It will be in abundance, it's a better quality and it doesn't take as much work to get it to the perfect stage.

"The key thing is flavour; the fact it hasn't had a lot of time getting to your table.

"Otherwise people pick things early – maybe four or five weeks ahead of time so they can mature in transit. But the problem with that is the best part of the growing process, and where they get their flavours, is the last knockings on the tree or in the ground. So although it may not last as long when you get it – which is good because you'll use it quicker – it will taste so much better.

"And I can buy it cheaper which means I can roll that over to the customer. So better quality, better flavour and right behind that is better value for money.

"You need to remember that the seasons bring with it a flexibility. What might be available in March, might not be available in May. But what you will get will be equally as good but different.

"It frustrates the hell out of me that you can buy strawberries in November, it's flown half way across the world and it's just got no flavour."

Mr Phillips lives with his family close to Leeds Castle – a home which puts him within easy reach of his three restaurants – and has ambitions to spread his wings yet further.

But it may not be in restaurants.

He explains: "I'm a big backer of the traditional pub. We are such a big grower of hops and we have such a great tradition; I want to bang the drum of local pubs.

"So hopefully later this year, I'd like to get myself into a couple of pubs. It will be different to what you get at my restaurants. But you'll get a great steak and ale pie – a great pint – and in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere with a lovely beer garden. They're a dying breed.

"But that's my mission for the next 18 months."

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We are committed to adding more local suppliers to our online service and any local business or producer that wishes to join our campaign should contact us at foodforkent.co.uk or email us at feedback@kosmedia.co.uk



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Author's traumatic childhood memories help her write book for bereaved youngsters

Guiding children through grief



SUPPORT: Book is aimed at guiding children who have lost loved ones through the bereavement process

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

CHILDREN who have suffered the loss of a loved one will be helped to cope by a new book.

Written by Canterbury resident Dianne Leutner and illustrated by Daniel Postgate – son of Bagpuss creator Oliver, who died last year – the book entitled Remembering wa launched this week as part of the Child Bereavement Charity's Mother's Day campaign.

Youngsters are encouraged to answer questions in the book to help them through the grieving process, as well as draw pictures or stick photographs of the friend or relative they have lost.

Mrs Leutner, 43, created Remembering after her father died just over two years ago.

She said: "I experienced a lot of death when I was a child, so I knew a bit about bereavement and when my dad died I wanted something positive to come out of it.

"I lost six cousins in many accidents, a little nephew and one of my best friends. There was a lot of crying when I was a child and these awful things just seemed to keep on happening.

"I never lost a brother or sister and my dad died later in life, so I can't compare my experiences to those who have.

"I was just seeing things from afar but the fact the charity wanted to publish my book shows they thought there was a gap in the market too.

"People don't always know how to deal with children after someone close to them dies, because they go from being happy one minute to quiet and sad the next. This book helps them talk about it."







LAUNCH: Author Dianne Leutner's book was illustrated by Daniel Postgate (right), son of late Bagpuss creator Oliver (below)

Mr Postgate, 45, from Whitstable, has been writing and illustrating books since 1994 and lost his father Oliver in December last year.

In Remembering he writes about the time a large white owl swooped into the field behind his house shortly after his mother died in 1982. Children who fill out the book are asked to remember any similar experiences to help them cope with the loss of a loved one.

Humour

Mrs Leutner said: "I think it was part of the grieving process for Daniel as well. He's my friend but when I approached him to illustrate the book he didn't think his style was suitable because his illustrations had too much humour in them.

"I told him the book needed humour because bereavement is not just about crying, it's about remembering the good times and being able to laugh as well. I think he's done a fantastic job."

The Child Bereavement Charity's Mother's Day campaign is supported by patron Prince William, who last week spoke of the emptiness he experiences as a result of the tragic death of his mother Diana, the Princess of Wales.

Mrs Leutner said: "Everybody says Mother's Day is a happy day but for some people it's a tragic day, just like Christmas and birthdays.

"One of my best friends died on Mother's Day and I think of her mother on this day every year."

• ***The book is only available from the Child Bereavement Charity for £5 plus postage and packing. See www.childbereavement.org.uk for more details.***

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Festival to celebrate literary giant and ladies' man

The scandalously good Mr HG Wells



By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

THE first festival in the name of scandal-hit author HG Wells is being held in Folkestone later this year.

Wells was famous for his books The War of the Worlds, The Time Machine, The Invisible Man, and First Men in the Moon, all written at his home in Sandgate.

But he was also notorious as a ladies' man. Festival organiser Mary Mather, 83, said: "He was a right go-er and in the end had to flee Sandgate for London.

"He fathered children by other women, despite being married. It seems his wife didn't really worry about that much, but as Wells was a magistrate, it didn't bode well for him.

"Other people in the community were not pleased, and he eventually left this area and went to London. The most notorious escapade was when he went to Le Touquet on the north French coast and got a woman called Amber pregnant. Her father threatened to horsewhip him."



OPEN BOOK: Wells during his time in Sandgate

She added: "Much of his life is embedded in this area, which is why we are organising this festival.

"We very much hope it will become an annual event and want to launch the first one with as much spectacle as we can."



LADIES' MAN: Wells and friend

Organisers are hoping Jeff Wayne, who produced the 1978 album and rock opera stage show of The War of the Worlds, will attend. Wayne is taking that show on the road again this year, 31 years after the LP was number one in 11 countries.

There are a number of events leading up to the weekend of September 19-20, which marks the birth of Wells on September 21, 1866, in Bromley. The centrepiece of the festival will be an annual short story competition with a prize of £1,000 for an original story in the style of HG Wells.

Anybody in full or part-time education is eligible to enter. The closing date is July 20.

In addition to his best-known works, Wells wrote short stories and novels which were set in the streets and shops of Folkestone.

A short film is being produced on his life and local libraries and bookshops will mount displays of Wells' books. Other exhibitions and events are also being planned.



Among these are writing workshops to encourage and help develop the hidden talents of those who may be hesitant to enter the competition.

Guided walks and coach tours are also planned. These will take in Spade House, which was built by Wells in Sandgate, and other sites where he and his contemporaries met, talked and romanced, including the Cat and Custard Pot pub in the hamlet of Paddlesworth, near Hawkinge.

A keynote speaker at the festival will be local resident Reg Turnill, the former BBC aerospace correspondent who reported on the real first men on the moon – Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin – 40 years ago from mission control in the United States.

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All-girl gangs trend on the rise, claims expert

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

GANGS formed entirely of females could be on the rise in the UK, according to a leading expert on group delinquency.

Tara Young, who is a senior research fellow at London Metropolitan University, said the increased number of violent male gangs in recent years was probably creating a similar trend in the opposite sex.

However, she added that all-female groups had been in existence for many years and not all young girls should be tarred with the same brush.

Ms Young, 39, gave a seminar on the subject at the University of Kent's Medway campus on Tuesday.

Beforehand she told KOS Media she wanted to debunk some of the myths surrounding young women and gangs.

She said: "The talk is to give people an understanding of this phenomenon and put it into context. Some of the national newspapers treat the issue in a very sensationalist way by describing female gangs as being more deadly than male ones, calling them feral youths and so on.

Distorted

"These are all things being said about young women and it makes them all seem the same, when they are obviously not.

"From my experience of going out and talking to girls, it's a highly distorted picture."

From Ms Young's research into American girl gangs, she discovered they were usually formed by females with links to male gang members.

She said: "According to the Metropolitan Police, there are 174 male gangs in operation in the capital alone and I am sure most districts throughout the country know of at least one.

"Looking at past trends, there should now be the presence of female gangs too, and the Met says it knows of three.

"In America there has been at least 80 years' worth of academic study carried out on all-girl gangs and the evidence is that they are pretty rare. In the UK we are not quite sure of exact numbers or what sort of criminal activity they undertake because not a lot of research has been done.

"However, authors such as Charles Dickens wrote about them many years ago, so girl gangs are certainly nothing new."

Ms Young's seminar at Medway was the latest in the University of Kent's criminal justice series, which was launched in 2007.

Hosted by the Kent Crime and Justice Centre, the series aims to give students and the public a deeper understanding of how the criminal justice system works, as well as an appreciation of the challenges faced by front-line workers.

Lecturer Dr Simon Shaw said: "Given the current obsession with gangs, knife crime and young people, we were fortunate to have one of the leading experts in the field speak to us about her experiences of researching these subjects."

Visit www.kent.ac.uk for more information.

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County assigns 10 more crews to pothole work

AN EXTRA 10 road crews are out working to reduce Kent's potholes, bringing the total to 66 crews, says County Hall.

That's three times as many as the 22 out fixing the roads a year ago, because of this winter's exceptionally severe weather.

Kent Highways says it is investing money to tackle the problem, but urged people to show patience as these repairs will take some time.

Interim director Caroline Bruce said: "This is not going to be resolved overnight and I am grateful for everyone's patience.

"The problem of potholes is affecting every local authority across the county and is going to take time and money to resolve."

KCC is to spend an additional £15.9 million on highways maintenance during the coming year.

TWO high street brands have opened new stores at the Ashford Designer Outlet.

Footwear firm Skechers and clothing and sailing specialist Musto are both now operating from the out-of-town site.

Centre manager David Maddison said: "Although conditions are tough we continuing to prosper and I'm sure Skechers and Musto will be popular with our shoppers."

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Students Bond with man who wrote the theme tune

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

JAMES Bond composer David Arnold has shared top secrets of success with film and music technology students at the University of Kent.

Mr Arnold, who has provided the score for every 007 film since Tomorrow Never Dies in 1997, took time out from his hectic schedule last week to give advice to those hoping to follow in his footsteps.

The seminar at the university's Medway campus was arranged by music journalist Tommy Pearson, who liaised with lecturer Jonathan Vincent.

Mr Vincent said: "It was a coup for him to come and talk to us because he doesn't usually do this sort of thing. Last year we tried to get him in but he was in the middle of scoring Quantum of Solace.

"He's very down-to-earth though and he got on with the students extremely well.

"He was wearing a baseball cap and he has a similar accent to people in Kent because he grew up in Luton, so I think that helped them relate to him.

"It was an interview seminar rather than a workshop but it was very insightful to listen to him speak about the film composition process.

"We also watched parts of Independence Day, which he also scored, and he talked about how he approached writing the music for it."

Mr Arnold was assigned the task of Bond composer following the success of an album he produced in 1997 that featured new versions of classic 007 songs including Diamonds Are Forever and Live and Let Die.

Scores

He has also provided the scores for a host of other blockbusters including Stargate, Godzilla and 2 Fast 2 Furious, and is currently working on the third in the Chronicles of Narnia series – The Voyage of the Dawn Treader.

The Grammy Award winner is also responsible for the instantly recognisable theme tune for Little Britain.

Mr Vincent said: "The seminar was primarily aimed at third-year students so they could learn what it takes to score a film from start to finish, and they received a great insight from David.

"They were all very enthusiastic after his visit and were full of praise for David and the advice he had given them."

Meanwhile, the students received another treat this week when two-time Grammy Award-winning music engineer and producer Tchad Blake paid them a visit.

Mr Blake, who has worked in the industry for more than 25 years, spoke at length about his career, his use of experimental recording techniques and the future of music on the whole.

Among the many artists the 53-year-old American has worked with are Peter Gabriel, Sheryl Crow and Pearl Jam.



SECRETS: David Arnold talked about his compositions for films such as the latest in the Bond series, Quantum of Solace

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THAT ONE! David Arnold also wrote the opening title music to hit comedy Little Britain

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Bus driver attacked

TWO teenagers have been arrested over the alleged assault of a bus driver in Whitstable.

The driver of the Canterbury to Whitstable bus stopped the vehicle in Bennells Avenue at 6.40pm last Sunday, after shouting and swearing was heard on the upper deck and another passenger reported seeing a boy with what appeared to be a gun.

The driver asked a boy to leave the bus and as he was following him downstairs a girl hit the 41-year-old driver on the head with her handbag.

The two left the bus and the driver carried on with the journey.

A 16-year-old boy from Herne Bay was arrested on suspicion of possessing an imitation firearm and a 15-year-old girl from Whitstable was arrested on suspicion of assault.

They have both been released on bail until April 14, pending a decision to prosecute.

Cancer nurse's visit could save lives in Uganda

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A CANCER nurse from Uganda has visited Kent to observe the work of her NHS counterparts.

Wendy Hills, lead nurse for cancer at East Kent Hospitals University Foundation NHS Trust, went to the east African country last January to help set up a nurse-led chemotherapy service at the International Hospital in the capital Kampala.

Deeply affected by the trip, she wanted to do more, so she invited Irene Nazozzi, lead cancer nurse at the hospital, to Kent.

There is no national health service in Uganda and people who need treatment for cancer have to pay, or simply do without.

"When we went over there we showed the nurses a lot of skills and changed their practices, but it was hard for Irene to understand because she had not seen how we work here," Mrs Hills said.

Mrs Hills praised Mrs Nazozzi's efforts in such trying circumstances and said her time in Uganda had made her realise just how advanced oncology treatment is here compared to Third World countries.



CARE TIPS: NHS lead cancer nurse Wendy Hill (centre) with Irene Nazozzi and a patient at the oncology unit at QEQM in Margate

Mrs Nazozzi approached the trip with the aim of taking ideas from the Kent hospitals to apply them with the resources available at home.

Mrs Hills said: "She will be able to give quality treatment in a Third World country with the resources they have."

Mrs Hills told of the shocking differences in Ugandan healthcare and how the Ugandan nurse, who is five months pregnant, still mixes the chemotherapy drugs, which nurses over here would never be allowed to do for safety reasons.

Mrs Nazozzi said: "This oncology unit is much more established, the nurses do not prepare chemo, it is done by a pharmacologist in a special area where it is prepared."

She said she had lots of ideas she would like to implement back home before she begins her maternity leave.

"Patients have more choice, they can have the chemo they prefer, which I would love to be able to offer patients in Uganda.

"We do not have an NHS, patients pay for chemo. At the hospital where I work there is a charity fund for some of the patients which will pay for their treatment.

"We assess them depending on what is available in the funds and if they have the specific cancer we can treat them for free."

She told how breast prosthesis, which women use after losing a breast to cancer, that were brought over by Mrs Hills to the hospital had been a success with women.

"The major problem about cancer in Uganda is a lack of awareness. We are seeing progress but many people still do not know how to identify problems," she said.

Mrs Nazozzi added: "Breast prosthesis are not available in my country but the women that have them from the last time have a much improved self-image."

• ***Drop off your unwanted breast prosthesis to Jane Orwell at the Viking Day Unit at the QEQM in Margate.***

WIN! Family tickets to the Medway Festival of Steam and Transport 2009

THE Medway Festival of Steam and Transport takes place at The Historic Dockyard Chatham on April 12-13.

Favourites making a welcome return include vintage cars and classic motorbikes, commercial and military vehicles, steam traction engines and locomotives to name just a few. Plus the Happy Feet Jazz Band with their New Orleans-style Jazz will play around the Dockyard and the Newfoundland Dogs Team will parade around the site with their little carts.

Also new for this year is the 'Extreme Globe Riders' Show', a high energy, 'acrobatics-on-motorbikes' display in a huge metallic sphere.

The show is a heart stopping spectacular where on-lookers will experience the thrill of danger, along with great effects and commentary.

The riders in the globe cross each other with speeds over 40 miles an hour! Hundreds of steam and transport exhibits, sideshows and vehicle parades, together with the distinctive smell of steam make this an Easter event not be missed!

KOS Media has 10 family tickets up for grabs. To enter, simply answer this simple question:

Q) When is the Medway Festival of Steam?

Send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Steam Festival Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Closing date is Tuesday, March 31, 2009.

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Trust's appeal to help save meadow

A FUNDRAISING appeal has been launched to try and save one of the few remaining wildflower meadows in the county.

Kent Wildlife Trust needs to raise £80,000 to protect the ancient meadows that make up Cowden Pound Pastures nature reserve, south of Edenbridge.

It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and has been managed by Kent Wildlife Trust since 1996.

Dave Hutton of the Trust said: "We simply could not ignore the rare opportunity to purchase these very special meadows, so rich in wildlife, when they were put up for sale recently.

"The only reason we felt able to do this was that we were confident that our supporters, who are so passionate about wildlife, would respond with their customary generosity.

"On a typical August day, these meadows are transformed into a stunning wildlife spectacle with one of the largest displays of devil's-bit scabious in Kent – a carpet of vivid blue blooms which, in turn, attracts clouds of butterflies."

The meadows are abundant in anthills and are home to dormice, grass snakes, brown hawker dragonflies, common spotted and heath spotted orchids, and purple hairstreak and brimstone butterflies.



UNDER THREAT: Devil's-bit scabious at nature reserve in Edenbridge

Birds that breed here include sparrowhawk, nuthatch, tawny owl, blackcap, whitethroat and greater spotted woodpecker.

The funds raised will not only help cover the costs of purchase but the expense of essential habitat restoration and management.

• ***Anyone who wants to help can go to www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk for details or call 01622 662012.***

Seeing is believing – pamper your mum this Mother's Day



SPECSAVERS, Toni & Guy and Heasman Jewellers in Tonbridge are ensuring one lucky mum is well and truly pampered this Mother's Day.

The Specsavers store, at 15 High Street, is offering a whole array of goodies to one lucky winner, including a pair of designer specs with single visions lenses.

The winner will also be treated to a brand new look, from Toni & Guy at 58 High Street. The prestigious hair salon will be throwing in some luxury hair products, including shampoo and conditioner.

What's more, Heasman Jewellers, at 1 Angel Walk, is giving the winner £25 to spend in store, so the lucky mum will be sure to dazzle this Mother's Day.

Specsavers stocks the very latest designer frames from ranges including fcuk, Jasper Conran, Missoni and Osiris - Specsavers' own brand.

Specsavers customers can also choose from a selection of frames that have been exclusively recommended by celebrity stylist, and presenter of Channel 4's How to Look Good Naked, Gok Wan.

To enter, simply answer this easy question: ***Q) Question: What is Specsavers' own brand of glasses?***

Send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Specsavers Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

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If you do not wish to receive any literature please write 'no literature' on your entry. Please send the name of your lucky mum along with your answer.

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CyberMentors taking on the hi-tech bullies

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

PUPILS from across the county have taken their battle against the bullies to cyberspace.

Youngsters from 11 Kent secondary schools have been trained as online peer mentors to help clampdown on the abuse meted out on social networking websites such as Facebook and MySpace.

The CyberMentors scheme, which was launched last week by the charity Beatbullying, allows victims to talk through their problems with other children on a dedicated website.

Among the Kent schools signed up to the initiative is The Abbey School in Faversham.

Peer mentor co-ordinator Wendy Gregory said: "Bullying has mutated because of advances in technology. There's a certain amount of physical bullying that goes on in schools, I don't think anyone would argue with that, although there are systems in place to deal with it.

"What the CyberMentors scheme provides is a new system to deal with a new type of bullying. It has been very popular, with lots of our children keen to take part."

A Beatbullying survey of more than 2,000 young people aged 11-18 found that more than one in three had been a victim of cyber-bullying.

The three most common forms were abusive text messages, prank telephone calls and social networking site posts, with girls up to four times more likely to be targeted than boys.

Youngsters who sign up to the CyberMentors scheme are placed on a five-stage training course that, upon completion, allows them to give advice and support online.

In situations where a victim could be in immediate danger, older and more experienced cyber-counsellors will take over.

Rachel Panikker, peer mentor co-ordinator at Hillview School for Girls, in Tonbridge, said: "Any kind of bullying can have a massive impact on the victim.

"It affects their friendship groups and leaves them feeling vulnerable about what people are saying about them. It can lead to them being ignored and all sorts of other unpleasant things.

"In extreme cases, the victim may stop coming to school or want to go to another school. Because of the medium in which cyber-bullying occurs, it can be useful for mentors to go online and use the same sort of language to give help and advice.

"Sometimes victims feel more comfortable talking anonymously."

The CyberMentors scheme is being part-funded by the Department for Children, Families and Schools and was launched last week by Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

Kent's Olympic gold medallist, Dame Kelly Holmes, has lent her support to the initiative, along with boxing great Joe Calzaghe and hip-hop group N-Dubz.

Beatbullying chief executive Emma Jane Cross said: "It is unacceptable that one in three of our young people is telling us they have been victims of cyber-bullying.

"It is a growing problem affecting millions of children and to date efforts to tackle the epidemic have fallen short.

"CyberMentors is the direct result of feedback given by the young people we have been working with in schools and communities across the country for the last seven years.

"It is the first time the third sector, the Government, volunteers and young people have worked together on a large scale and in an integrated way to tackle one of the biggest issues facing society today."

The other Kent schools involved in the project are Hillview Girls, Weald of Kent Grammar, Bennett Memorial Diocesan, Langley Park, Aylesford Sports College, Brockhill Park, Highsted Grammar, Simon Langton Grammar, Longfield Academy and Fort Pitt.

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Makeshift shrines offer spiritual solace to Gurkhas in Afghanistan combat zone

A long way from home, but fighting spirit intact

GURKHAS based in Afghanistan know they are twice removed from their homeland, ***reports Nick Ames***.

They have joined the British Army and been based at Shorncliffe, Folkestone, after having grown up in the villages of their native Nepal.

Then they have been despatched on active service to a combat zone far nearer their own country geographically, but further away in terms of comforts, culture and spirituality.

While Nepalese restaurants are a feature in east Kent, the soldiers' native cuisine is only available in Afghanistan if they cook it themselves.

Music and reading matter have to be imported, while Hindu and Buddhist beliefs receive little or no respect in a Muslim country.

It was the Taliban who destroyed the Buddhas of Bamyan, the two monumental statues dynamited in 2001 after they were declared 'idols', which are forbidden under Sharia law. World opinion condemned the destruction of the Buddhas as an example of the intolerance of the Taliban and fundamentalist Islam.



PADRE: Peter Scott

So the Gurkhas were pleased when army padre Peter Scott helped dedicate a temple for them at the British Army base, Camp Bastion.

"The Gurkhas had just had a Pandit – a Hindu holy man – sent from Nepal to minister to their spiritual needs, so we all turned out to help," said Padre Scott.

"In two days they had set up a temple made of cardboard and wood, which was painted. I took part at the first service. I respect all faiths and this was a way of showing my support for the Gurkhas. There was quite a lot of sitting around cross-legged and we did say 'om' quite a bit. But I could see they found it spiritually fulfilling. The Gurkhas are far from home in many senses and it was good to see their spiritual needs met."

The pandit ended the service by decorating foreheads with an orange dot, called a tilak, which is for luck.

"It looked like we'd all been Tangoed," said Padre Scott. At other bases shared by the Gurkhas with other British Army troops, joint Christian-Hindu multi-faith places of worship have been established.



BRAVE FACE: Makeshift shrines and multi-faith services are catering to the Gurkha soldiers' spiritual needs in Afghanistan



One aspect of Nepalese culture – a particularly martial one – has proved popular with US Marines who treasure souvenirs in the form of the kukri, or traditional knife.

They are forever trying to swap baseball caps, clothing and military accessories for the weapons which are the national icons of Nepal, symbolising pride and valour.

The soldiers' war cry is 'Jai Mahakali, Ayo Gorkhali!' which translates as 'Glory be to the Goddess of War, here come the Gurkhas!'

The troops are revered by all the international forces in Afghanistan, whether US, French, Estonian, Danish, Australian or Afghan soldiers and policemen.

Professor Sir Ralph Turner, MC, who served with the 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles during World War One, wrote one tribute the soldiers are particularly proud of.

It is as appropriate for the deserts and mountains of Asia as it was for the European trenches: "As I write these last words, my thoughts return to you who were my comrades, the stubborn and indomitable peasants of Nepal.

"Once more I hear the laughter with which you greeted every hardship. Once more I see you in your bivouacs or about your fires, on forced march or in the trenches, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun.

"Uncomplaining you endure hunger and thirst and wounds; and at the last your unwavering lines disappear into the smoke and wrath of battle.

"Bravest of the brave, most generous of the generous, never had country more faithful friends than you."

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TOP BRASS: Sir Richard arrives at the Gurkhas' HQ

General's flying visit

A SURPRISE visitor to the Gurkha headquarters in the town of Musa Qa'leh was the head of the British Army, General Sir Richard Dannatt.

Sir Richard's Chinook helicopter landed in the base's compound before a high-level briefing with senior officers.

The visit was a morale boost for the men and it enabled Sir Richard to see how their standard of living had improved.

But it also brought top brass to a place that had been retaken from the Taliban only recently and was the scene of a suicide bomb attack late last year.

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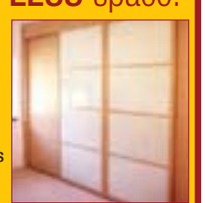
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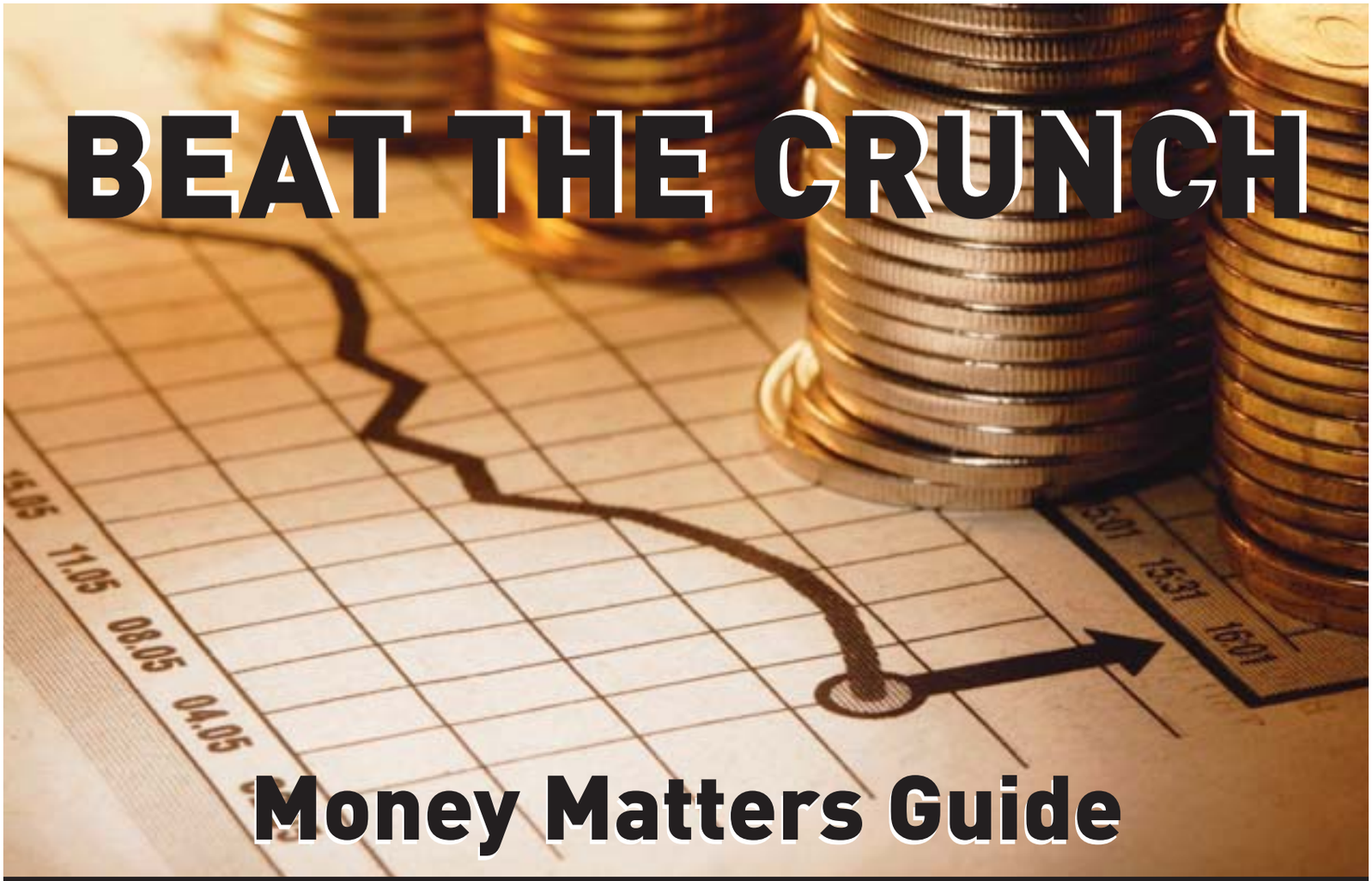
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Castle's royal flush as rare portrait of Henry VIII's mother completes family set



ROYAL BLOOD: Elizabeth's portrait now hangs alongside that of her infamous son and his family at Hever Castle, left



LADIES' MAN: King Henry VIII was raised by his mother Elizabeth of York

A RARE portrait of Henry VIII's mother has joined paintings of the rest of the Tudor king's family on the walls of Hever Castle, ***writes Steve Knight***.

The former home of Anne Boleyn houses paintings of the infamous monarch's father, eldest brother and all his six wives, with last week's addition of Elizabeth of York completing the set.

Television historian Dr David Starkey unveiled the 16th century portrait at the castle, near Edenbridge, to mark the opening of an exhibition celebrating 500 years since Henry VIII's accession to the throne.

Hever chief executive Duncan Leslie said it was likely the king visited Kent while he was courting Boleyn, who became his second wife, and was later beheaded.

He added: "He came to the county quite a lot and although it's difficult to be 100 per cent certain, it is believed he did visit Hever Castle.

"It would have been a major upheaval for the Boleyn family to receive him, but it is very plausible because her father was also linked to the Royal family as a courtier."

The stately home boasts many artefacts that mark the romance between Henry and Anne, such as a replica of the clock he presented to her as a wedding gift.

Staff at Hever purchased the portrait of Elizabeth of York from the private Philip Mould gallery in London. Mr Leslie said it was a welcome and important addition to the collection.



He said: "Henry VIII's father was the future Henry VII, who was a Lancastrian. When they beat the Yorkists in battle at Bosworth Field, he made the smart move of marrying Elizabeth of York, who was the most senior member of that faction.

"By giving birth to the future Henry VIII, this woman played an important role in setting the Tudor lineage and, you could argue, the present day lineage too.

"Also of importance was the fact that Henry VIII was brought up by his mother, which was quite unusual in those days and is possibly why he kept marrying lots of different women.

"It's been suggested that because he was always surrounded by women, he had a far more romantic outlook on life than most other men at the time.

"While most kings wanted to marry to carry on the Royal lineage, he was very much into love as well and so he had the difficult task of trying to balance both requirements when choosing his wives."

For more information on the exhibition, entitled Henry VIII: The Pampered Prince, visit www.hevercastle.co.uk or call 01732 865224.

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Oi! Darling, thanks for the scoop

THE credit crunch is "likely" to be coming to an end in under five years, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in an exclusive interview with Kent teenagers from Oi! magazine.

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

The group secured a sit-down chat with the Government's moneyman to grill him about job prospects, the economy and how he does his own banking.

Habib Abdalla 17, Ashleigh Ellice 17, and Joshua Thomson 14, talked to Mr Darling at the Treasury in Whitehall.

In their feature, the youngsters from the Marlowe Academy, Ramsgate, wrote: "When we spoke about it later we all thought that although he definitely knew who we were, maybe he wasn't quite sure how to deal with what we were – teenage journalists with a real audience of others like us. Whatever it was, there was definitely an initial sense that we weren't really connecting. Maybe Mr Darling, known for being cautious, was being particularly so because we were this somewhat 'unknown quantity'. However, as the interview went on, the studied pose of 'senior politician speaks to young people' changed.



MONEY TALKS: Mr Darling speaks to Oi! magazine's teenage journalists

"The sense of careful consideration was still there – but as he leant forward to debate a couple of particularly strong points he started coming alive."

But he did speculate clearly on when the financial crisis may start to improve.

In a question from Ashleigh asking whether it was worth her going to university to study journalism, Mr Darling recommended she do go.

He added: "By the time you leave university, it is likely that the credit crisis will be coming to an end and that you will get a relevant job, most people do."

He also defended the Government's massive borrowing as it attempts to kick-start recovery, saying: "Basically, we get money in and then we have to decide how to spend it. But in a time such as we are experiencing now, there is a huge gap in terms of what the country needs and the overall money to pay for it.

"This gap has to be filled by borrowing. Only the Government is big enough to fill this gap because it can borrow money more easily. If things aren't maintained they get worse and worse. Governments are there to make things better when they are difficult – this is probably one of the reasons President Obama has announced similar measures in the United States."

And of his own bank account, Mr Darling said: "At the end of the day, I'm just a normal person who gets paid. I have to pay my mortgage and bills, the same as anyone else.

"Then I have to decide what I want to spend the rest on – or even whether save it for a rainy day."

He called on teenagers to realise they have a future responsibility to the country to keep it going: "They are the future and as such play a major part in our country."

And he praised Oi! magazine, which is written by Kent teenagers for their contemporaries, saying: "I welcome anything that allows people to understand they have a stake in our country. I believe we all have a duty to contribute – even from an early age."

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Being fenced in really gets my goat ...



A PAIR of feral goats that developed a taste for escapology have been given a new home by the Wildwood Trust.

The beasts made several successful breaks for freedom from their old home and their owner decided they needed a more secure environment. Wildwood offered the animals a home at its park between Canterbury and Herne Bay, where their enclosure has been strengthened to ensure they cannot escape.

The goats and their offspring will become part of Wildwood's education work, with the opportunity for school groups to get close to the animals.

Head keeper Paul Wirdnam said: "The goats are settling in well, but we'll be keeping a close eye on the enclosure to make sure they can't escape."

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COMMENT

Promising future gets put on hold

WITH the UK facing a severe skills shortage, it is of paramount importance that our colleges receive the support they are entitled to.

It is therefore unacceptable that money promised for building projects has been pulled at the 11th hour – with little indication as to when or if the funding will ever reach them.

It is understandable that the Government may be running low on cash during the economic downturn, but why were such funding promises made if there was even the slightest risk they could not be met?

The coming months will be tough for the Kent colleges affected by this blunder, as staff work out what steps to take and decide whether they need to amend their long-term plans. Hopefully, any delays in the funding process will be minimal and they can soon forge ahead.

If not, both the Government and the Learning and Skills Council will have a lot to answer for.

We love you, mum

MOTHER'S Day is a chance for children across Kent and the rest of the UK to show their love and appreciation for the women who brought them into this world.

But it is also a day when we should spare a thought for those who have lost their mothers – or for mothers who have lost their children.

We hope all Kent's mums have an enjoyable Mothering Sunday.

OPINION: They've all got it infamy



We admire nothing more than those with fame, but our lust for recognition comes with a dark side, says Chris Murphy

WE ALL know and admire those who have done something to make them famous; those with a particular skill that sets them apart, be they a movie star, sportman, musician or whatever.

It's usually tough to become famous. It can take years to build up the knowledge of your particular trade and then be able to exploit it in the right place at the right time.

Not everyone coming out of fame school goes on to become an Angelina Jolie or Brad Pitt – talk about a marriage of fortunes with that couple – but they are darned good at what they do.

My son is half way through a national tour with his band, Wait For Tomorrow. Sounds grand doesn't it? But some of the dives he has played 'Oop North' make the mind boggle.

But he is young and working hard at getting himself recognised, so perhaps one day someone not in the family may know his name.

On the other side of the coin is the anti-Christ of fame, those who achieve the sort of recognition none of us really wants – the infamous.

Right now, the world is obsessed with two members of this group. We know we shouldn't be curious, but we are. Well, most of us are.

Let's start at home. Jade Goody used to be Britain's most hated woman. She used some particularly ill-chosen words to someone of a different ethnic background and instantly became a pariah.

And now? Well, she has her own television show, but even Jade Goody can't have wanted this sort of fame. She has just weeks to live, yet has managed to win over a nation that once despised her.

And then there is Josef Fritzl, surely one of the most monstrous men to have walked the Earth.

We are fascinated by the horrific details of his court case, where the overwhelming evidence against this elderly Austrian finally forced him to admit the murder of one of his many children.

It is a court case that has been kept short, thank heavens. No-one can truly understand what his children went through.

Fritzl has become Austria's most hated man – after Adolf Hitler. Although as many people these days probably don't realise Hitler originated from this small central European country, Fritzl will be the number one most loathed man from anywhere, let alone Austria.

Josef Fritzl has acquired the ultimate in infamy. To destroy your own flesh and blood in such a gut-wrenching way would have had many people queuing up to throw the switch on his electric chair.

Yet we have all seen the grainy, home-movie footage of this innocuous, ordinary-looking man enjoying beach holidays. How can someone earn their place in the history books so effortlessly?

It could be argued that he didn't know what he was doing was so terribly wrong. But we don't believe that for one moment. His mother ill-treated him, we are told. So?

Those who court fame with their special skills must wonder what they are doing wrong when someone like Fritzl can monopolise the world's newspapers, television channels and radio airwaves for something so deplorable.

Youngsters can reach breaking point all too easily and schools are easy targets for those with weapons.

Schools in the United States are all-too common targets for the disaffected and disturbed. And now Germany too has felt the power of the gun in the wrong hands. The lust for recognition aimed in the wrong direction can leave many victims in its wake. Why can't some people live with themselves and resist the urge to do their will against others in their own society?

It's that need for fame. Or, failing that, infamy. Knowing that in their last moments, they will go down in the annals of horror.

And there will be others who just can't allow themselves to live with who and what they are.

But who would want to follow in such tainted footsteps?

There are people out there with serious problems and it is down to all of us to keep an eye on each other to try to ensure that these things never happen again. Infamy is nothing to be proud of.

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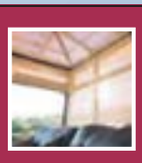
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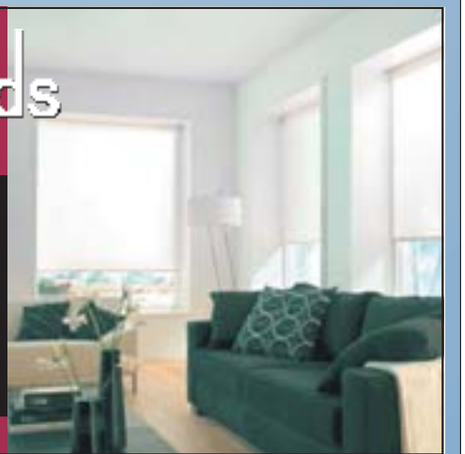
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Hey honey, we're in a buzz over bees

Declining populations need our help

By **JANE JEWITT**

OUR economy is fragile, we are all well and truly aware of that, but did you know that more than £50 million was lost to our economy last year due to lack of pollination by bees?

Pollination can be by wind or by animal. Often the animal, be it a moth, bat, bee or other insect, is only interested in getting to the sweet nectar for food. The clever plant is arranged so that pollen is collected on the body of the animal and transfers to other plants as the animal moves along.

Honeybees are particularly good at pollination, from our point of view, because they will work through a crop, garden or farm crop, systematically until every last flower has been visited; they pollinate about 90 per cent of our British apples.

But bee populations are declining. One third of the bee population did not survive the winter of 2007. How many more will have died this winter?

The decline is due to a number of pests and diseases, primarily the varroa mite. Disease can spread rapidly through a colony due to its high population density.

Colony Collapse Disorder is causing serious problems in the USA; the bee population is so decimated that bees are being trucked enormous distances across the country in order to pollinate crops.

CCD has not reached the UK but many believe it is only a matter of time.

Could you see your way to keeping a hive? Think about learning the ancient craft of beekeeping, collecting at least 20-40lb of honey a year, and also beeswax, improving the flowering and cropping of your own garden, and increasing the general quality of the wider environment.

Get in touch with your local BBKA, British Beekeepers Association, to learn more.

All of us gardeners can help by growing plants which are rich in pollen and nectar. Bees need food from February through to October, but early flowering plants are particularly useful.

If you have room for a tree in your garden choose an early flowering one such as hazel, willow, hawthorn or a fruit tree.

Other early season plants include snowdrop and crocus, Doronicum, Mahonia, heather, Sarcococca, Chaenomeles, rosemary, Daphne and ivy.

Allow ivy to grow until the pom-pom flowers develop and the plant has developed into a shrub, flowers are not found on creeping strands of ivy.

Some of the best spring flowers for bees are fruit bushes, cotoneaster, hyacinth, forget-me-not, candytuft and gorse. Plant in large groups of the same species, the larger the better.

Herbs are good too, especially sage, mint, marjoram and thyme. Other summer flowering plants include roses, lavender, cosmos, sunflower, heliotrope, campanula... the list could go on and on.

Honeybees have been in the UK for at least 5,000 years. What other insects provide us with honey while at the same time, ensuring seed is set for most of our flowering plants, fruits and vegetables?

Please help to look after our honeybees.

• ***To contact Jane Jewitt call 01732 882711 or email janejewitt@tiscali.co.uk***



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Beds made to delight

By **GABRIELLE FAGAN**

FOR many of us the bedroom is our favourite room in the house – a private sanctuary where we rest and relax.

But despite the fact that we spend nearly a third of our year under the sheets – on average 106 days a year in bed – it doesn't necessarily mean we're getting adequate rest.

The majority of us wait far too long before replacing a mattress, robbing ourselves of sweet dreams.

According to the National Sleep Council's research to mark March's National Bed Month only one in 10 people claim to always sleep well, while one in five suffer frequent sleepless nights. Two-thirds sleep more poorly now than a few years ago.

Annie Deakin, editor of online interiors shopping site mydeco.com, says it's time to take action: "Frankly, if you can't remember the last time you had a good night's sleep, it could well be your rickety old bed – and not your stressful lifestyle – that's to blame."

It seems a 'seven-year itch' doesn't just apply to marriages – Deakin says it also applies to mattresses, because that's around the right time to buy a new one.

"Always opt for the largest bed you can, making sure, of course, it fits your room. You'll never regret it as you'll have enough room to spread out and be comfortable, particularly important if you're sharing a bed as a couple."

Chrissie Rucker, founder of The White Company agrees, adding it's also essential to consider how the bed fits your decor.

"A bed's style dominates a room, so think carefully about the style you prefer.

"But don't feel limited by your home's style. Vintage beds can work brilliantly in a contemporary setting, while sleek modern beds, dressed up, can also fit into the most traditional scheme."

Follow these tips to ensure your mattress and bed suit you.

• MAKE A MATTRESS WORK

Brent Cooper, sleep expert at London bedding specialists Hasten, says a decent mattress is a must.

"A restful night is vital for good health so give choosing a mattress the attention it deserves," he says.

Cooper says a mattress must be supportive, but that doesn't mean it has to be hard. Firm mattresses are actually for heavy people – the heavier the person, the firmer the springs need to be.

"A mattress that's correct allows your hips to sink in, giving support to your lower back. It's not enough for your lower back to just touch the mattress surface," he says.

"Don't be frightened of feeling comfortable, even though the feeling may be unfamiliar to you if previously you've wrongly taken the 'hard bed is good for you' approach."

A bed should be at least six inches (10cm) longer than the person lying on it.

If possible, avoid mattresses that increase body heat. The body's temperature needs to cool to 28 degrees during deep sleep, otherwise sleep quality may be affected. Foam, latex and memory foam offer superb support but tend to be warmer. Cooper says beds with natural fillings such as cotton, wool or horse hair are preferable as they allow ventilation and cope with body moisture effectively.

• CHRISSIE RUCKER'S BUYING TIPS

"As a bed should last you at least 10 years it's wise to choose a classic design that can easily be updated with bed linen and accessories," she advises.

Divans have a solid base, either sprung for maximum comfort or with a platform top. This works in tandem with a mattress and should not be bought on its own.

"A high quality divan will have more give and feel more luxurious than a mattress on a slatted base, and can accommodate hidden storage drawers or a pull-out bed."

A bedstead consists of a frame, usually wooden or metal, with a slatted base.

"As the base is raised off the floor it makes for easy cleaning. It can give a lighter, airier feel to a bedroom, but you won't be able to update the bed by simply changing the headboard or valance."

• CHIC AND CONTEMPORARY

Dwell's collection of modern beds comes in a variety of woods and finishes, and should suit those who like their beds lean and sleek. My favourite's the High Gloss in white or black (£325 for a double bed).

Alternatively, lie back in a Park Lane bedstead (£2,695 at Furniture Village). It's upholstered in leather and has a television built into the bed's foot end.







SWEET DREAMS: From left: Tesco Direct Mayfair King Size Bed with Black Damask Headboard £869 and Embroidered Wave Oblong Cushions £8 each; And So To Bed's Arco 5ft double bed, £649; Nottingham white painted bedstead, with underbed basket storage, and integral bedside table, from £299, from Littlewoods Direct; And So To Bed's Versailles bedstead, £2995

BUDGET BUY: Create a bed to your own taste at Homebase, which offers bedframes in a variety of finishes from £117.39, headboards from £38.99, and extras like underbed storage drawers.

• HIGH & MIGHTY

Rucker says a headboard can transform a standard divan into a statement piece.

For indulgence The White Company's Bergman bed upholstered in velvet upholstery is hard to beat. A double (including headboard and base) is £1,350.

For style, I particularly like M&S's Ascari Bedstead with a buttoned white leather headboard, £1,349, for a bang on trend combination of vintage and modern.

BUDGET BUY: Mayfair king size bed with black headboard, £869 from Tesco.

• TRADITIONAL

These can be as decorative or embellished as you please, and range from a charming, vintage style iron bedstead through to ornate French style boudoir beds.

Feather and Black's a great destination for those who want affordable, quality beds that belie their price tags. Its Olivia bed, in a white-painted Shaker style with rattan under-bed drawers, is £1,095 (plus headboard £189), for a double bed.

BUDGET BUY: A Nottingham white painted bedstead, with underbed storage and integral bedside table, from £299, from Littlewoods Direct. (Be prepared to get out the screwdriver as it's self-assembly.)

Contact details

- And So To Bed: 0808 144 4343/www.andsotobed.co.uk
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Can you cut it?

By **HANNAH STEPHENSON**

SPRING is in the air and that means gardeners will be digging out their secateurs for some serious pruning as the growing season begins.

However, some may come unstuck if they prune at the wrong time, damaging new shoot growth and losing this year's flowers, while others will hack away at woody plants which should be left to develop unpruned, apart from removing dead and diseased stems occasionally.



So, what should you leave alone? It's best not to interfere with rock roses, a family of short-lived summer shrubs, which won't come back easily if cut back hard.

Laburnum, Pieris floribunda, daphnes, sarcococca and some rhododendrons are also best left unpruned, otherwise you may ruin their shape or reduce flowering the following year.

Slow-growing deciduous shrubs such as hibiscus, azaleas and hydrangeas don't need much pruning and should be allowed to keep their flowerheads all winter.

If you didn't remove dead growth from perennials in the autumn you can do it in early spring, which can help if you are planning to lift, divide and replant specimens and the dead foliage marks the position of plants which may be difficult to locate.

Most evergreens, including conifers, only need an optional summer shaping with shears.

The shrubs you should leave alone in early spring are those that flower in spring up to early summer such as philadelphus, forsythia, kerria and weigela.

This is because the flowers are produced on shoots that developed during the previous growing season, so these flowering shoots should be cut back immediately flowering has finished, to allow new shoots to form.

The ones that flower from early summer onwards including potentilla, lavatera and fuchsia, are the ones that need pruning in early spring, before growth starts.

Cut back old wood hard to a low bud to encourage vigorous new growth that will produce flowers in the same year.

You may be a bit tentative about giving

Good enough to eat

MANY salad leavesand many types of mustard, are designed to be picke as needed, some regrowing from the stump left when the leaves are cut.

You can buy packets of mixed salad leaf seeds, starting them off in small pots or modules on a windowsill or in the greenhouse, for planting outside when the weather warms up.

Use cloches to warm the soil for a few weeks before planting outside, choosing a site in full sun for early sowings, in fertile, moisture-retentive soil. Seeds can be sown at two or three week intervals for a continuous crop.

The aim is to harvest small quantities of leaves as you need them and you should have two or more pickings from one cut-and-come-again variety, cutting off the leaves with scissors about 2cm from the compost, leaving the cut stump. Add a high-nitrogen liquid feed and keep the plants well-watered and within a few weeks a flush of new leaves should have appeared.

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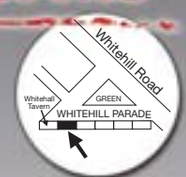


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TIMING: From far left, Passiflora and fuchsia can be pruned early, whereas weigela need leaving until flowering has finished. Right a rose is being carefully pruned

the shrub too much of a haircut, but there are certain plants which you can cut right back within an inch of their lives in early spring, including Buddleia davidii (butterfly bush), which can be cut down to a couple of buds from the ground, Caryopteris x clandonensis, Ceanothus 'Burkwoodii' and santolina.

Other plants which can be pruned in early spring include euphorbia, lavandula, passiflora and roses, although early pruning of bush roses (before you are confident spring has arrived) is risky in cold northern gardens.

Tidy up and prune early-flowering climbers as soon as they have flowered.

Those which flower later in the year should be left until the following spring.

Hybrid (large-flowered) clematis, which fall into Group 2, should be cut right back to a pair of fresh green buds about 30cm (1ft) above the ground in early spring. Clematis which flower in summer and again in autumn need less drastic pruning. Thin out the stems every year to keep them tidy and every other year cut back the oldest stems to 60cm (2ft) above the ground.

Some shrubs do not take to hard pruning, such as lavender and heather.

Make sure when cutting them back that you don't cut back into old wood or they won't recover.

If you make a note of what you need to prune and when, write the instructions on a label with the plant's name and push it into the earth or loosely around the plant for future reference.

There are some basic rules when pruning:

- Use sharp tools and keep cuts clean.
- Cut out weak, dead or diseased stems before anything else and cut back those stems which which are rubbing against the larger ones.
- Cut just above a bud, sloping away at a 45 degree angle, so rainwater doesn't run into the cut and cause rotting.
- Try to prune so that air and light gets into the centre of the plant. If you want your shrub to spread wide, cut above outward-facing buds. If you want it to grow upwards, cut above inward-facing buds.

Hopefully, come summer, you will see the fruits of your labour as flowering shrubs and perennials burst into bloom with more vigour than ever before.



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Top tips for tip top lawns

By **HANNAH STEPHENSON**

EVERY spring gardeners dust off the mower to give their grass its first cut, only to find a mass of moss, thatch, pests and weeds invading their lawn.

Moss is a problem for most, especially in the mild, damp weather of autumn and early winter. Most prevalent in shady areas, which are not adequately drained, action is needed now or it will weaken your lawn.

Try to catch any moss infestation early, by raking out patches and treating them as they appear. Use a good-quality spring-tine rake or, if the area is very large, hire an electric or petrol-driven rake to make the job easier.

Improve your drainage, aerating the lawn by spiking, to discourage further build-up of moss. Make holes in the lawn to a depth of 10-15cm, using a garden fork or purpose-built lawn aerator, and fill in the holes with sharp sand to boost drainage and reduce compaction.

You can also use moss killers, which will turn the moss black but not kill the grass. There are combined fertilisers and moss killers, with formulations specifically for spring or autumn use, which needs to be applied when the soil is moist and the grass is dry. By mid-spring you should be able to rake out any remaining moss and oversow bare patches with grass seed.

Thatch is another common problem. It's a mat of dead grass that forms on the surface of many lawns, separating the living grass from the soil, which reduces aeration and impedes the entry of water and nutrients. Remove it regularly by raking with a spring-tine rake at least twice a year, in spring and autumn.

One increasingly common disease is red thread (Corticium disease) especially in mild, damp weather, according to lawn experts TruGreen.

Red thread looks like pink Shredded Wheat, appearing in late winter and early spring, and is unsightly, although the bleached patches will recover. Grass, which is rarely fed, is susceptible, so good lawn care is essential. Feed your lawn in spring or summer every year, spike the turf and don't mow too closely if you have sandy soil and you should be okay.

Weed grasses such as meadow grass, with coarse leaves, show up among fine grasses and are almost impossible to zap using chemicals because their foliage is so similar to grass. The only answer is to dig them out as they appear.

Snow mould (Fusarium patch) is the most common fungal disease in autumn and early spring, after long-lying snow has melted, when small patches of grass turn yellow and spread to leave large brown patches on the lawn.

It kills the grass and in wet weather the edges of the diseased areas may be covered with white or pale pink fluffy mould.

There's no effective treatment, so the answer is to avoid infection. Don't use a nitrogen-rich fertiliser in autumn or winter, spike the turf regularly and keep off the grass in frosty weather.

To keep your lawn healthy, feed it annually in spring, applying fertiliser when the soil is moist, during showery weather, or watering it in. Carry out hand-weeding with a daisy grubber or hand fork if there are only a few weeds. Raking will also help stop the spread of creeping weeds. If problems persist, feed and weed the lawn in early summer using a combined dressing.



PESTS: Now we come to mowing our lawns for the first time this spring, left, we're also finding lots of weeds that need digging out

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Join the glitterati

By **GABRIELLE FAGAN**





ALL THAT GLITTERS: From left: Karma Mural, custom printed and made to measure to customer specification, £35 from DIGETEX; Heal's Kartell Bourgie, 24K, Gold Plated Lamp £425, Pineapple Silver Ceramic Vase £55, Copper Croc Ceramic Vase £60, Orsini Tea Light Holder £15 and Bay Leaf Silver Plated Bowl £60

SECRETLY, I've always admired celebrities and their passion for bling.

They're never afraid to splash the cash and create homes full of in-your-face glitter and sparkle – from gold taps to gilded furniture. While their rooms may not always ooze taste, they do shriek success and luxury – and it looks like the rest of us are following their lead.

Metallics are one of the hottest interiors trends this year, and whether it's rich gold and bronze or sleek silver, these faux or real finishes are featuring on everything from fabrics to accessories.

"Using metallics is a great way of adding drama and sparkle to a design scheme," says interior designer Nina Campbell. "Metallic accessories are characteristic of what I call 'unashamed luxury'. But you don't have to spend a fortune, just add small touches, a vase or a lamp, and create rooms that have a stylish sheen."

All that glitters needn't be gold and mining the high street for precious metals is easy as there's a glorious razzle-dazzle variety of homeware to make your home a shining success. But unless you've got delusions of grandeur and want your 'des res' to look like a gilded palace worthy of the pages of a glossy celebrity magazine, Campbell urges a light touch.

"It's far better to follow the 'less is more' rule so you achieve discreet decadence rather than garish glory."

• ON YOUR METAL

Reflect the look on your walls in copper, bronze or pewter tones, or dress windows with silky gold or silver fabrics, advises Annie Deakin, editor at mydeco.com.

"Metallic has taken the interiors, fashion and beauty world by storm this season," she says. "If you are fortunate enough to have walls that are flat and silky smooth, metallic wallpapers will work wonders, giving them a shiny, space-enhancing edge."

You could go prospecting among designer Marcel Wanders's collection of gold and metallic finish papers for Graham & Brown. His Grace, Stella and Suzanne papers are £35 a roll.

Or if you want to make a statement – and get peace as well as bling – display a magnified image of a gold Buddha on a Karma Mural, £35 by Digetex.

• INVEST IN GOLD

"Gold looks great in all seasons. In summer it reflects the rich glow from the sun and in winter it warms us up by reflecting all the gorgeous light," says Claire Hornby, creative stylist at Barker and Stonehouse.

She believes gold works best in cluttered rooms, teamed with over-the-top ornate French detailing and luxurious designs.

"Keep the walls simple in a golden cream shade and reflect this with cream carpets on the floor. Now add in as much gold as you can. Opt for furniture with a gilt finish and accessories to match for an opulent, over the top and glorious room."

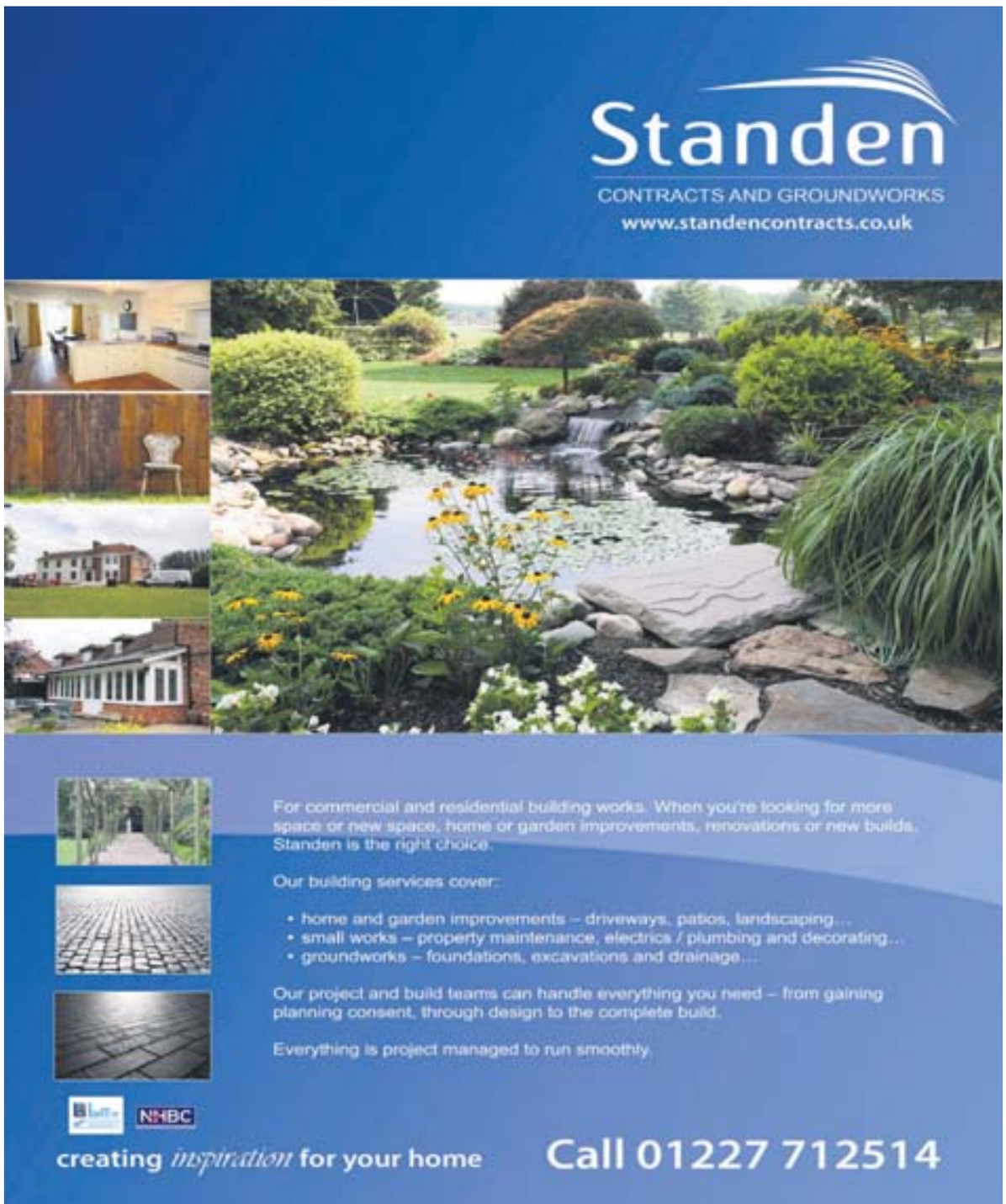
Gilded furniture, such as a Liberty Gilt Library chair (£379), which wouldn't look out of place in a palace, is just one of the appropriate pieces at Barker & Stonehouse.

But if that's too retro, Heal's contemporary collection has plenty of lustrous items. Add a bronze Trumpet side table (£295) or get the real deal with a Bourgie 24-carat gold plate table lamp, £425.

• BRING ON THE BLING

Small is beautiful, so the saying goes, and even a few gold cushions or perhaps a 'gold bar' door stop (£44.95 from mydeco.com), will bring your home up to date.

Plunder Dwell's selection of gilded homeware, or go to Heal's for a gold Vintage picture frame (£30) and a slim gold Pendant light (£85).



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March on the plot

Seedbeds

Seeds should be sown into a 'fine tilth'. This means the surface has been prepared through digging and subsequent raking.

Clods of soil must be broken into fine crumbs. Think of it as a comfy quilt that embraces and snuggles your seeds at planting time.

Scorzonera

This is an ancient vegetable which can be planted from now until mid-May. The black, thong-like root may penetrate so deep that digging it out in one piece becomes a personal challenge.

It is delicious eaten raw, steamed or baked. Because of the length of root Dirty Nails sows scorzonera in a deeply dug bed which is as stone-free as possible. The seeds resemble large grains of rice and are sown at 6ins (15cm) intervals, 1.5ins (4cm) deep.

Sow two seeds at a time and thin to the strongest seedling as soon as the grass-like shoots have arched out of the soil. Scorzonera is simple to grow. All it demands is to be kept moist and weed free, standing happily in the ground all winter for digging out as and when required.

Salsify

A root veg that resembles a large white carrot. Cultivation is exactly the same as for scorzonera. It has a delectable flavour.

Two or three 10ft (3m) lines of both salsify and scorzonera should be ample for even the hungriest family of four.

Beetroot

Sow the 'Detroit 2' variety of beetroot in 6ft (2m) lines every fortnight from now until July. Hopefully, this will ensure a steady supply of golfball-sized, sweet-yet-earthy roots from mid-summer and through the autumn.





GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT: Beetroot and Pot Marigold are just two of the items Dirty Nails will grow, the latter is great to discourage pests

Beetroot seeds are small and knobbly. They should be sown thinly not more than an inch (2.5cm) deep. Dirty Nails allows 12ins (30cm) between each line.

Germination can be anything from a few days to a fortnight or so, depending on the weather.

'Detroit 2' seeds are multi-germ, which means each one may produce two, three or four seedlings. These should be thinned to the strongest as soon as they are big enough to handle.

Dirty Nails aims to thin his beets to 5ins (13cm) intervals in order to allow them room to grow. As always, beets like to be kept moist and weed-free.

Pot Marigold

Dirty Nails will also be sowing Calendula (Pot Marigold) around the outside of his veg plot about now. There seems to be something about calendula that inhibits tenacious undesirables like couch grass and it is for this weed control purpose that he grows it in this way.

It's dead easy. Scatter the seeds as required and cover with a fine layer of soil. The resulting riot of orange and yellow flowers creates a glorious bee and insect-rich arena for the vegetables growing within.

• How to Grow Your Own Food by Dirty Nails (ISBN 9781905862115) is available from www.dirtynails.co.uk or Amazon, rrp £10.99.

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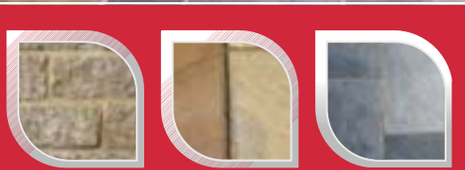
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Parade triumphalism

Taking the view that you have to back the troops no matter what, is incredibly infantile (Hatred goes unheeded, Letters March 15).

Is it any wonder we are so loathed when our establishment routinely ignores the rules of international law, fabricates excuses, twists intelligence and murders with impunity?

Have people forgotten how and why we are in Iraq? Do people really know why we are in Afghanistan? And don't try to fob me off with the old canard that our troops are fighting the 'war on terror' for freedom and democracy – our involvement in the Middle East boils down to the control of natural resources, namely gas and oil.

Of course, the establishment would like to curb all dissent about their illegal wars, taking the view that we must all 'move-on'.

Tony Blair, Geoff Hoon, Jack Straw et al must be hugely satisfied at the crowds of little Englanders waving their little flags and cheering heartily, as the troops march proudly through the streets.

But the kind of message this sends to people in the Middle East is that people in this country actually approve of our own barbarity. My message to all you 'flag-wavers' out there, is that you've been had!

These 'welcome home parades' smack of conquest and triumphalism. The invasions of these countries were monstrous acts of cowardice that have cost hundreds of thousands of innocent lives – we have absolutely nothing at all to celebrate.

Alan Haynes
Chatham

Diet is more important

Some people are making a lot of noise about the EU plan to control the sale of vitamin supplements.

If we eat a properly balanced diet these supplements are unnecessary. If taken in excess they can be harmful. For years people have been making money out of people's fads.

It is high time this trade was brought under proper control.

David Burgess
Hawkhurst

Bank bosses should made to face all the pensioners

What a good letter from S Burns on March 15, titled Bullet-proof bankers.

One of the reasons our once wonderful country has gone down the drain is the collapse in standards and integrity of the professional classes.

F Goodwin was supposed to be a Scottish chartered accountant but apparently treated City fund managers with arrogant disdain if they dared to question him.

These sorts of people used to be called spivs. Why do the professional bodies not kick these people out of their institutes for professional misconduct, especially when they have been entrusted with other people's money. It would be interesting to see if F Goodwin had the guts to attend a meeting of pensioners, who have lost considerable amounts of their retirement savings for which they have worked diligently and with integrity for some 40 years due to his arrogance and stupidity and explain to them how he justifies his £700,000 a year pension, whilst they now have to go without.

I suspect he would dive for the nearest rat-hole.

C Davis
London

Privately established

Your article on the shortage of grammar school provision in west Kent (March 14) might have gone a step further.

As the recession bites deeper, there are parents with children in independent schools obliged to now find state school places for their sons and daughters because they can no longer afford school fees.

In many cases those pupils will have well-established study habits and be working at levels ahead of their peers, and so they merit grammar school places; and this will put additional pressure on county provision.

Indeed, some might say that families who have not drawn on state funding for their children's education for several years deserve 'priority treatment' in this time of difficulty.

DJ Gutteridge
Chatham

YOUR LETTERS

KOS Media welcomes your comments and letters for publication. Please send correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Alternatively fax them to: 01303 817002, or email them to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk. Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

We need a clear up

Litter is everywhere, and it gets worse and worse. Whilst attempts are made to keep our town centres litter free, which is commendable, outside in the country lanes, along highways and byways, they are simply strewn with litter. What tourists must think of us I just can't imagine.

This afternoon I drove along the road connecting the M25 with the M20 (from the Dartford Crossing), the litter at the sides of the road was appalling.

We don't just need to penalise litterbugs, we need to have a big clean up as well.

There must be plenty of spare labour out there that needs something to do, and perhaps they could repay their debt to society in the process.

Ted Prangnell
Kennington, Ashford

BNP demands proof

So Donald Worlsey (Letters, March 1) has resurrected himself from the grave of his moribund party advocating that democracy is "our best weapon against such evil" in reference to the rise of the 'Common Sense' party. The BNP. Good!

Whilst we all can sympathise with the genocide in Rwanda, slaughter of the innocents in Srebrenitsa, etc, I can't see what that has to do with the rise of the BNP, who are more concerned with the genocide of the British race than what is going on in other countries.

I wish to challenge Mr Worsley to clarify his malicious and damaging statement as to what the "evil philosophy as propounded by the BNP" is and what association the BNP has with Rwanda, Srebrenitsa and the Holocaust.

Failure to adequately provide such proof

Letters continued on page 48

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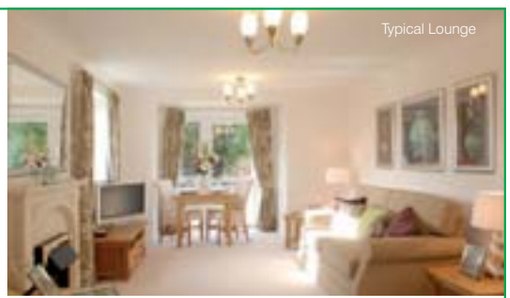
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BIRTHS

BEAN
Alison and Tristan Bean of Sandwich celebrate the birth of their son Ashton James Bean born on 23rd February 2009 weighing 8lb 5oz.

BERRY
Daryl and Mercede of Seasalter are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Bailey Robert John, on 7th March 2009. A new baby brother for Rihanna.

BLIGHT
Simon and Ami of Faversham are delighted and proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Evelyn Rose Blight, on 12th March 2009.

BUTTERWORTH
Matthew and Kayleigh of Canterbury are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Amelia Kay, on 10th March 2009.

CLARKE
Stuart and Laura of Folkestone celebrate the birth of their son Louie George Clarke on the 6th March 2009.

COCKRILL
Peter and Kizzy Cockrill celebrate the birth of their son Zachary Jacob Cockrill weighing 8lb 13oz on 2nd March 2009, a brother for Xanthe.

CROOK
Erin Kinsey Crook born on 12th March 2009, weighing 7lb 11oz. A beautiful daughter for Emma Louise Carr and Gary Andrew Crook in Maidstone.

FOXLEY
Luke and Louise are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter Grace Louise Foxley on the 1st of March 2009.

GARRETT
Ruby-Isla Garrett born on 7th March 2009, weighing 5lb 13.5oz. Daughter to Freddie Garrett and Tania Lane in Snodland, filled with Happiness and joy!

HADLOW-EVES
Nick and Tierney of Faversham would like to announce the safe arrival of their beautiful baby boy Leo Isaac, baby brother of Morgan Joyce.

HARRISON
Craig and Carina of Broadstairs celebrate the birth of their daughter Kayleigh Louise on 14th March 2009.Little sister for big brother Ralph.

PARRA PIPER
Cesar and Zoe of Sevenoaks are delighted to announce the birth of their son Lewis Santiago Parra Piper born 1st March 2009 weighing 6lb 15oz.

SAVELL
Elissa born on 6th March 2009, weighing 8lb 7.5oz. Daughter to Graham and Munevver, and sister to Ella.

TRACEY
Matthew born on 13th February 2009 weighing 7lb 4oz to proud parents Scott and Victoria.

WAKE
Max Philip son to Emma Stuttard and Jason Wake, brother to Jamie, Alex and Phillip born on 6th March 2009 weighing 9lb 2oz.

WINWOOD
Anthony and Ivy Winwood welcome their daughter Samantha Jade Minwaa Te to our family. She was born on 6th March 2009 at 7.07am after a long labour. She was a fighter and didnt want to come out!

DEATHS

CALABRESE O'DONNELL
Maria Aitken (nee Calabrese) and Colm Christopher O'Donnell of Allington celebrate the birth of their son Dylan Anthony Calabrese O'Donnell on 2nd March 2009 at Maidstone Hospital.

DABORN
My dearest husband, Leslie, passed away on 13th March 2009. Beloved father of Christopher, Robin and Ian, father-in-law to Anne, Pat and Carol and grandfather to Sian, Paul, Stephen and Elizabeth.

ELSEY
Alice Frances Elsey of Folkestone died peacefully on 10th March 2009. Funeral service at Hawkinge Crematorium at 12.30pm on 27th March. Family flowers and donations to the Heart Foundation.

MANLEY
Arthur Talbot Manley of Canterbury passed away suddenly following a long illness on 10th March 2009. Beloved husband of Joan and a much loved dad and grandad. He will be so very sadly missed. The funeral took place at Barham on 20th March.

PENNAL
Iris June Pennal beloved wife to Arthur. Passed away peacefully on 12th March. Always loved, sadly missed. Funeral service at Barham Crematorium on Monday 23rd March at 11.20 am. Family flowers only please. Donations to Pilgrims Hospice Canterbury.

PRESSNELL
Leonard William Pressnell of West Hougham passed away peacefully on the 13th March 2009. Funeral Service to be held at Barham Crematorium on Tuesday 24th March 2009 at 2:40pm. He will be loved and missed by all. Family flowers only, donations gratefully received for Parkinsons Disease Society.

SHORT
Peter Short of Ash passed away suddenly but peacefully on 8th March 2009. A much loved dad and grandad who will be deeply missed. Peter was involved with numerous village activities and will always be remembered by friends and contacts. There will be a service at Ash church on 24th March at 2pm followed by cremation at Barham and then a final farewell at The Chequers in Ash at 4pm.

Letters continued from page 47

may cause him to reflect that perhaps his untimely resurrection from the grave may prove rather costly and embarrassing to him. I don't think Mr Worsley has the right credentials to utter the word "democracy", as it is his party that has gone against the voice of the nation by denying them a promised referendum, thus ensuring this country will still cough up £56 billion plus every year to the ever-encroaching EU state.

They have introduced ID cards and have made this country the most spied upon in the world. Stella Rimington, the ex MI5 chief recently said we were virtually a police state.

Last November members of the EU voted in favour of introducing a range of "thought crimes" which include "racism – incitement to hatred – apology, denial or trivialisation of genocide" – with a punishment of up to three years in prison.

While no-one would encourage hatred against anybody else, the law is clearly framed in such a way as to become a catch-all for anyone who would dare suggest that European nations have a right to remain European. The new law will also be directed specifically at the internet.

We have never been freer since the Middle Ages thanks to Mr Worsley's "democratic" Labour party and the EU. The EU are setting up job centres, paid for by British taxpayers in Africa for Africans to come to Europe and work. I have a picture in front of me of Yaya Sidibe with his pregnant wife and six children saying he intends to find a job in the UK. Another is of Ali-Ali with his two wives, his sister and six children who said, "We hear reports back home of how good life is in Britain. It will be a better place for my wives. But the most important thing is for my children to get a good education."

I hope Mr Worsley will be the first to offer to ease the burden on the taxpayer by putting Mr Sidibe, Ali-Ali and their families up for a few years "until they get on their feet". These will be the start of the £2-an-hour migrants who will be given a house and live on benefits like the Afghani woman with seven children who, after crying, 'asylum', marched into a £1.2 million house costing the taxpayer £150,000 a year. Perhaps another reason why people are voting BNP.

Not many people buy newspapers these days but the ones who do read about the imported gun and knife culture. Gang wars between ethnic minorities. The devastating effect of Labour-introduced drink and drug laws. Yob Britain where a nun and her friend were robbed, murderers let out of prison to kill again, sleaze and corruption in our ruling classes. Hiding crosses in case it offends a minority group, teaching of young children the pleasures of gay sex, failing to deport people like Abu Qatada, who is claiming benefits of £47,000 a year and his house arrest costing nearly £500,000 a year. A school where Christian children were threatened with detention if they didn't kneel and pray to Allah, the rapid increase of immigration when we have over two million unemployed, the rise in TB and HIV because health checks are not imposed on immigrants. Space does not permit me to mention a lot more.

No doubt Mr Worsley agrees with all I have mentioned as it is his "democratic" government in office. But the BNP doesn't. Perhaps another reason why we are gaining support.

Perhaps Mr Worsley can refresh my memory as to why the Treason Act was removed from the statute book shortly after his 'democratic' party entered office? It is disingenuous of Mr Worsley – who has obviously not read our manifesto – to say that we are going to repatriate hundreds of thousands of key ethnic workers – the country would suffer.

We will stop any further immigration and deport the estimated two million illegals who have no right to be in this country. We need a debate on the EU and immigration.

It is no good to keep saying a "no platform policy with the BNP". We are the ones who are calling for it. We have nothing to hide. What are they hiding?

H Williams, Hythe
Prospective Parliamentary candidate for the British National Party for Shepway

More grammars needed

I share the concerns of Cllr Mark Dance and Michael Fallon MP regarding Labour's failure to ensure sufficient provision of grammar school places in Kent, Bexley and Bromley (Grammar shortage 'is fault of the Government', March 15). In fact, Gravesham MP Adam Holloway, has also expressed his concern that Building Schools for the Future (BSF) could be used as a mechanism for reducing grammar places further.

The Greenwich Judgement means the four grammar schools in Bexley would have no choice but to possibly admit pupils from neighbouring boroughs, some of which did not fight to retain their own grammar schools, simply because they live closer than some pupils from Bexley.

The shortage of places within the north west Kent area has been compounded when Bexley Grammar School opted to reduce its admissions by 32 places per year. Despite our objection to the Schools' Adjudicator, which is just a part of the DCSF, the reduction was upheld.

Whilst it may be the case that the DCSF has stated that no new grammar schools will open, it seems obvious that Labour is still wedded to reducing the number of grammar school places at any opportunity they can.

The Conservatives have pledged to allow expansion of grammar school places where population growth dictates because we believe in allowing as many pupils as possible to have high aspirations and strive for their ambitions.

Cllr Simon Windle
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Schools, Adult Education and Youth Services
London Borough of Bexley

Critical of police tactics

As a hard-working 24-year-old Kent resident I attended the fantastically well run climate camp last August in Hoo, giving up a week of my holiday to learn and act at the stupidity of allowing the coal-fired power station to be rebuilt on our doorstep.

The much hyped carbon capture and storage (CCS) 'experiment' proposed for Kingsnorth, is described by a Commons parliamentary committee as 'unproven economically'. Yet this could potentially be pumping out vast amounts of dirty smoke and locking us in to many decades of pollution, not to mention adding to extraordinarily high levels of asthma in north Kent.

However, the state-controlled police actions were commanded by Kent Police (working with numerous other UK police forces dragged away from fighting crime) to intimidate the majority of peaceful protesters and observers.

I was truly shocked at the illiberal way they appeared to be commanded to perform some kind of political censorship.

On the whole, during the week they acted in a threatening way. I ask why and who commanded them to attempt to bully people who were using our proud British right to free protest. Some £5 million plus of our taxpayers money was wasted. Who agreed to waste our money like this?

It is evident our government is not bright enough to offer any direction as far as climate change is concerned when they foolishly agree to allow power companies and build this unchecked 'experiment'.

I call upon local people to send a message to stand up against these greedy fat cat power companies putting profits before our future by voting against any Government not prepared to act to protect our environment.

No to brutal political policing. No to dirty coal, yes to clear and supportive money-saving energy-efficiency initiatives and yes to a new green economy, creating jobs and using our British brains to help solve this global problem.

Pete Simpson
Gravesham and Dartford Liberal Democrats Environment spokesperson

Idiocy causes crashes

In response to Katherine Barrett's letter of March 15, perhaps she could explain why her organisation is apparently so ineffective at doing its job?

I can only assume it must be, given the numbers of people still fined by speed cameras, despite the assistance which she quotes as being on offer to people.

I can offer help, however – several countries in mainland Europe use systems of speed camera controlled traffic lights, which turn red if approached too quickly.

These are apparently almost totally effective in keeping drivers at the speed limit as there is no point in exceeding it and triggering the traffic lights (apparently you also end up on the receiving end of other driver's irritation for doing so).

I don't hold out a lot of hope of seeing them in this country, however, as, being so effective, they generate practically no income.

More cynically, you could take the viewpoint that the system we use here has a built-in degree of ineffectiveness in order to generate income while making lots of noise about how important speed reduction is.

For the record, I actually agree it is, it's just that it's not as significant as we are led to believe and what we do about it doesn't work very well.

The vast majority of accidents (or call them what you will) are down to poor driving standards, ranging from incompetence to idiocy, with excess speed having only a minor role.

I also feel she rather shoots herself in the foot about fine incomes – if it's all so important, why isn't every penny ring fenced into improving road safety to try to stop the problem in the first place?

Finally, she shouldn't get too enthusiastic about only issuing one ticket a year – her job would go faster than a puddle in a heatwave if she did.

Nigel Clark
Hythe

Fast and the furious

It was ironic to read Terry Hudson giving us all advice on safe driving (Opinion, No truck with danger, March 15).

This, from a man who believes there should be no speed limits and who regularly encourages motorists to drive at whatever speed they like on all roads.

Terry Hudson and another frequent correspondent Phil Granger constantly write grossly irresponsible letters furiously promoting fast driving, condemning speed limits and ridiculing life-saving speed cameras. They seem totally oblivious to the dangerous messages they are spreading.

Both gentlemen are in their 60s and should know better at their age.

Thankfully, however, I doubt many readers are gullible enough to be influenced by their enthusiasm for speed or their paranoid delusions that safety cameras are just there to make money.

Clive Wilkins-Oppler,
Canterbury.

Beautiful compassion

'Tigger Joins Tigers', KoS, March 1, was a truly uplifting story, guaranteed to touch many hearts, including mine.

This is compassion at its best, not merely feeling sorry but taking positive action. The final quote from the article regarding a Kent-based soldier, "I love that dog I really do" is proof indeed that unconditional love and genuine compassion go hand in hand. As 'Tigger'

will soon be entrusted to the Royal Welsh Regiment at Minden, please can we have further updates on his life in Afghanistan?

In conclusion, may I offer the following piece of philosophy, 'Tis better to ease the suffering of one beast than sit and watch the sorrows of the world.'

Mary McNaulty
Brenchley

Leaders are failing us

Last week a local paper conducted an in-depth interview with Paul Carter, the Conservative Leader of KCC that showed good transparency of his views, not simply trying to politicise.

When asked about the threat posed by the recent BNP Swanley win in the Sevenoaks Council by-election, he described it as a wake-up call. He suggested the remedy was to get across Conservative policies as relevant by articulating them clearly at national, regional and local level.

He cited Gravesham's leader Mike Snelling as an exponent of this. Looking at local issues I would suggest that Cllr Snelling is not currently doing a very good job of listening to the voice of Gravesham, in particular with regard to the matter of the much changed and delayed Heritage Centre regeneration which we so badly need. The idea of a 32-storey tower was a disaster and earned Cllr Snelling the title of 'Madcap Mike'.

We want local leaders we can be proud of, not ones who attract slightly demeaning nicknames. As the elements of the regeneration come up for discussion, the council as a whole needs to listen to the voice of Gravesham.

I cannot believe that most people vote BNP because of their excellent policies. It is because we are currently being failed by those in power and the mainstream opposition.

Martin Wilson
Gravesend

Green efforts wasted

I was interested to read your report that cars which run on LPG enjoy reduced road tax.

I have a Volvo 940 which I had converted to run on gas and I notified the DVLA. When they sent me the renewal notice it was for the full amount.

When I phoned them they said that as the car was built before 2007 it did not qualify for a reduction! So much reward for trying to go green!

Mr Oliver
Gravesend

Saving from the top

Phil Granger, in his letter (KoS, March 15) says I am not aware of what is happening in the real world when writing about salaries paid by Kent County Council.

I am only too aware of what the current economic situation means for people in or out of work, having been declared redundant three times in the course of my career.

I was making two points: first, that the very lowest-paid among KCC's staff, earning below £12,403 a year, should be given extra help and second, that the cost of this should be paid for by reining in the salaries of the top earners, so that the rate of council tax would be unaffected.

Far from coming up with the old Tory excuses premium salaries have to be paid to get the 'right staff', these Labour proposals demonstrate how savings from the very top could be put to good use helping those at the very bottom.

Derek Smyth
Labour County Councillor for Ashford South
Labour KCC Shadow Cabinet
Member for Finance

Pointless concrete nag

No one will be surprised to learn KCC got burned in an ill-fated deal involving building a concrete plant in a green belt Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The possible 130k bill will barely register with those due to pick up the tab, accustomed as we are to KCC's financial prudence.

Reading about this made me think the ridiculous concrete horse planned for Ebbsfleet is a fitting symbol for KCC; oversized, overpriced, and with no apparent useful function.

Compare this giant mantlepiece ornament with the simple elegance of the horse carved in the hill above Folkestone. That is real art; graceful, dynamic and continuing a millennia-old tradition on the chalk downs. It makes a proud statement that can be seen for miles, and with a carbon footprint of approximately zero.

Is there a petition against 'Dobbin of Dartford'? I'll sign it.

Nigel Erricker
Deal

Terrifying terror laws

I totally support the KoS Comment (March 15) that the police response to Kingsnorth Climate Camp, should be referred to the Independent Police Complaint Commission.

Also there should be an enquiry into the misuse of the law, the anti-terror laws and the 3,000 plus other laws introduced by Labour.

Anti-terror laws were misused to manhandle 82-year-old Walter Wolfgang out of a Labour conference, for daring to shout, "nonsense". Other laws have been used to arrest Christians distributing leaflets and hold a motorist in a cell for two days, who allegedly 'revved' his car engine 'at' two Muslims.

With a government that is desperately trying to get in a position to monitor our emails, texts and our every movement and thought, we should be very concerned that they already have the power to use the law to limit political dissent, punish religious belief and punish people for what they may be thinking.

Phil Granger
West Malling

Raise a cup to elderly

We are writing to ask your readers to support 'Communi-tea Week', a nationwide campaign which helps tackle the problems of isolation and loneliness that millions of our pensioners face each and every day.

More than a third of older people in the UK, including half of all women aged over 65, now live alone. It is a frightening statistic but Communi-tea Week aims to bring together those who may be struggling on their own by reaching out over a friendly cup of tea.

Throughout the week from Monday, April 20, older people across the country are being invited to join in hundreds of tea-related events, from tea dances to afternoon tea parties, taking place in Bupa care homes across the country.

We are urging as many people as possible to support Communi-tea Week, so why not host your own tea party and invite someone you know who lives on their own to join you?

It may be a friend or a neighbour, or you may be part of a community group that can stir tea-drinkers in your area into action.

Please join us, put on the kettle and raise your mugs in support of a very worthwhile cause. We have a great opportunity to help combat loneliness among older people and make a real difference to those in need of a friendly face.

For more information about your nearest event, or for more ideas about hosting your own, call the Communi-tea Week hotline on 0113 381 6306 or email communi-teaweek@bupa.com.

Dean Cowley
Customer Service Director
Siobhan Drane
Community Affairs Manager
Bupa

Trust in saving lives

As a mother and grandmother I know only too well how devastating meningitis can be.

My youngest child contracted the disease at the age of seven but fortunately made a full recovery.

I know that we were among the lucky ones. Unfortunately thousands of others are not so lucky.

Survivors face a future with devastating after-effects and families are bereaved, left to face a future without a loved one.

I am proud to be an ambassador for the Meningitis Trust, which works tirelessly to help people devastated by this disease.

Its range of professional support services is truly a lifeline; without it thousands of people would be left to face the challenges of life after meningitis alone. But it needs your support to continue its vital work.

More than 500,000 people living in the UK have had either viral or bacterial meningitis.

Those who have survived are left coping with debilitating after-effects including deafness, blindness, limb loss, (where septicemia is involved), learning difficulties, memory issues and behavioural problems – any of which can lead to enforced lifestyle changes and relationship issues.

Please support the Meningitis Trust; you can really help it make a difference to people's lives.

Joanna Trollope, OBE
Author and Writer
The Meningitis Trust

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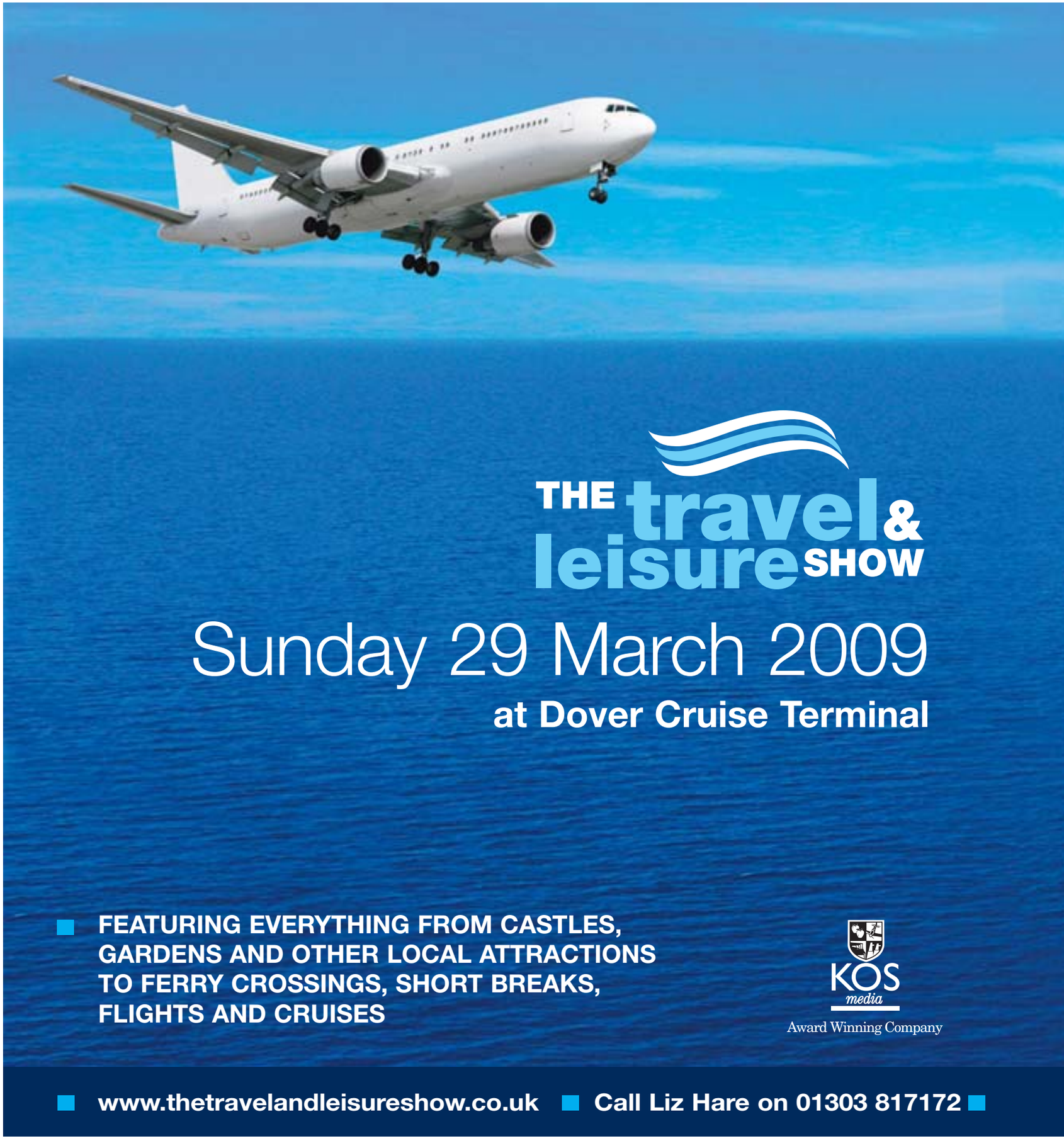
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Park and pride

STRICTLY Come Dancing star John Sergeant was on hand to present Tunbridge Wells council with a special award.

The political journalist attended a special ceremony in London and handed over a British Parking Commendation in recognition of a training scheme that gives new powers to traffic wardens to stop offences like littering.

Cllr Paul Barrington-King, portfolio holder for the environment, said: "This is great recognition for our parking team, who provide an excellent service and are leading the way in terms of training officers working within our communities.

"Not only do they keep the traffic moving throughout the borough but they are also eyes and ears helping to keep areas clean and safe."

Other councils set to follow in Tunbridge Wells' footsteps by implementing such a training scheme include Dover, Thanet and Ashford.



Pictured (l-r) are Jeanette Chalkley, notice processing officer, Emma Smith, parking manager, Richard Powell, director of services to the community, John Sergeant and Hannah Goater, notice processing supervisor.

New training centre boost for Bluewater

BLUEWATER marked its 10th birthday with the launch of a new training centre for retail staff.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

The National Skills Academy for Retail is a national network of 70 educational hubs, one of which is based at Bluewater's Learning Shop and will open its doors late next month.

Staff at North West Kent College, which is administering the training on behalf of the Government, decided to stage a glittering reception early so it would coincide with the 10th anniversary of one of Europe's largest shopping centres.

Principal Malcolm Bell was confident the initiative would have a positive impact on the retail industry.

He said: "The National Skills Academy for Retail is part of the Government's plans for improving the skills available to employers and improving opportunities for workers.

"Employers are taking control of the design and delivery of learning in their industry and by working with us they can obtain the training and skills they need, where they need it."

The Learning Shop, which is located in Bluewater's Upper Village, is a partnership between the centre's developer Lend Lease, North West Kent College and Jobcentre Plus.

Since it opened back in 1999, its dedicated staff have educated 11,627 students in a range of subjects and helped 21,055 people find jobs.

Mr Bell said it was the perfect place for the National Skills Academy for Retail to be situated.

Strengths

He added: "With so many people having access to training and educational possibilities on site, and with firms having the opportunity to improve their staff's skills, the Learning Shop is ideally placed to take part in this new development.

"This is a terrific example of the public sector and private sector working together with both playing to their strengths for the benefit of the local community."

Retail is the UK's largest employment sector, comprising nearly 300,000 businesses and employing about three million people – a tenth of the UK's workforce.



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e-mail: **georgina@turnersfinefoods.co.uk**

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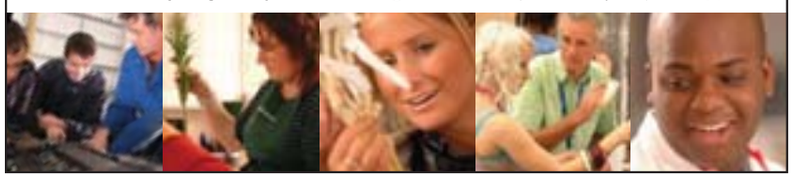
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20 hrs per week, salary £6.42 per hour

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

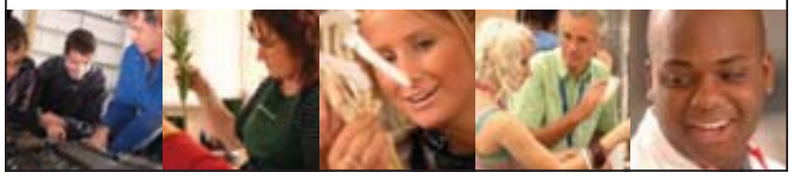
Staff benefits include:

- ***Pension & Life Assurance Scheme***
- ***Proximity to main bus & train stations***
- ***Close to City Centre***
- ***Sports Hall & Gym***
- ***Generous Holiday Allowance***
- ***Staff Discount Scheme***

The closing date for the above posts is Monday 30th March 2009 at 12 noon

CLICK www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/job-vacancies

CALL *01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)*



JobsforKent.co.uk
The smart way to find a job in the County

ICT TECHNICIAN REQUIRED

Pent Valley Technology College
Hours: 8.00am – 4.00pm, Monday to Friday
Salary: Kent Scheme 5 (£16,627 – £18,288)

This post requires an advanced computer user and involves performing basic diagnostic and recovery routines on network equipment, performing basic PC hardware repairs and upgrades. Implementing and suggesting improvements to school backup, virus protection and security policies. Tracking expenditure against an agreed budget and purchasing lower value items. The candidate will also produce instruction sheets and help train and advise both staff and pupils.

Are you self motivated, good at problem solving, customer focused and have a sense of humour? If so, we want to hear from you.

Previous experience of working as an ICT technician or similar role is required. Required to work some Saturdays in exchange for a weekday when requested.

For more information and an application pack please contact:
Miss S Spratley, Pent Valley Technology College,
Surrenden Road, Folkestone, Kent. CT19 4ED.

Email: samantha.spratley@pent-valley.kent.sch.uk
Tel: 01303 277161 ext 2218 Fax: 01303 279342

Closing Date: Friday 3rd April 2009

Interview Date: Week commencing Monday 6th April 2009

Achievement for all

TEACHER OF ICT

F/T Teacher of ICT required for September 2009 to teach from KS3 to GCSE or A Level.

Buckswood (NOR 350) is a thriving independent, co-ed, day & boarding school with a strong international ethos located on the East Sussex coast.

Closing date: Friday 17 April.

For a Job Description e-mail:
wisdom@buckswood.co.uk

See www.buckswood.co.uk for a fuller picture of life at Buckswood.

To advertise in this section

✆ 01303 817040



NORTHFLEET SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
Hall Road, Northfleet, Kent DA11 8AQ

Leader of Post 16 Education (or 14-19 Curriculum)

Upper or Main Spine plus TLR 1c (£8,611)

Our school is undergoing an exciting rebuild as part of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and our approach to learning is creative and concerted, with buildings reflecting our vision.

Our Sixth Form numbers some 120 students. We work collaboratively with all our local secondary schools and North West Kent College, attracting both male and female students. Some courses and our new diplomas are shared across the Gravesham collaboration and with KS4. These include A level Media and Photography, English and Psychology through to the Business & Finance and Society Health & Development diplomas. We have a reputation for leading innovation for offering a wide and varied range of courses at all levels.

You would be leading a team of well qualified tutors and teachers to build on our current success but challenge us to move forward. Our Leader of Post 16 Education is ably supported by our Post 16 Co-Ordinator.

As a clear thinking, good team player who is innovative and enthusiastic about learning post 16 and its future development you wil also be a highly qualified and leading practitioner.

General Teaching Vacancies at Northfleet School for Girls:

P.E. - History - Geography - Science - Media - English
NQT or Part time applications will be considered

For further information please contact Mrs T Davies or Mrs S Chisholm
Northfleet School for Girls, Hall Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8AQ
Northfleet School for Girls Tel: 0844 477 2525
email:personnel@northfleetgirls.kent.sch.uk

Closing date for applications: Tuesday, 31 March 2009

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual in the following area:

Electrical Maintenance Technician — Ref: P0070

Salary: £15,057 - £19,127 per annum

The successful candidate will assist the Maintenance Manager in the maintenance and repair of electrical systems and carry-out testing, servicing and minor works, including replacement of electrical installations, fire and lighting systems. The applicant will be a qualified electrician and conversant with the 16th and/or 17th Edition Wiring Regulations.

Closing date: Friday, 3 April 2009

Mid-Kent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

Mid-Kent College is an equal opportunities employer

Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School
Maidstone Road Rochester Kent ME1 3EL
Tel: 01634 844008
Email:
office@sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk
Website: www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

A Specialist Voluntary Controlled School in Mathematics, Computing and Humanities. An 11-18 Boys' Grammar School of 1180 students including 300 in the co-educational Sixth Form.

'OUTSTANDING' Ofsted November 2008 – "a buzz of excitement pervades the school"

PART-TIME TEACHER OF GERMAN

An enthusiastic teacher is required to teach German for two days a week from 20th April 2009. The Modern Languages department enjoys a newly equipped language laboratory and runs trips to Germany on an annual basis.

The successful candidate will be an effective classroom practitioner and be committed to enabling all students to achieve their full potential

OFSTED 2008 commented that students have a "willingness to participate in the wide range of opportunities available to them, to show initiative and to assume responsibility". Behaviour was found to be "exemplary".

If you are interested in applying for this post, then please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs Jacqueline Harrison, or visit out website www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

We are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.

Closing date for applications:
Wednesday 25th March 2009

Abbey Court School

"WE GROW PEOPLE"

Abbey Court School, a 'special' school and a 'special' place to work.

We are currently looking for a…

Speech and Language Therapist

to join and enhance our high calibre team.
Medway Scale, Grade B2
£26,706 - £34,107 (Full time – term time only - pro rata)

Abbey Court School is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 4-19 with severe learning difficulties. We are looking for an enthusiastic and effective Speech and Language Therapist, with a professional, flexible approach and a good sense of humour. In essence, somebody with an interest in an educational setting and who would like to work in a school committed to enabling pupils to reach their full potential.

Working hours are 37 hours p/w, term time only. Candidates should hold a relevant Speech and Language Therapy degree/qualification. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development. Visits to the school are welcomed.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):
Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP (01634 338224)

Please note CV's will not be accepted.

Closing date: 1.4.09

JobsforKent.co.uk

A selection of the 100s of Local Jobs online

Accountancy

Finance assistant
Ashford
Salary: TBA
To apply/more information:
CCL Label (Ashford) Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 503333
Email GMorgan@cclind.com

Accounts processing clerk
Ashford
Salary: TBA
To apply/more information:
CCL Label (Ashford) Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 503333
Email GMorgan@cclind.com

Administration, Secretarial, PA

Project Coordinator
Sittingbourne
Salary: £15,000 to £17,000 pa Excellent Telephone, Organisational, Admin and Communication Skills Essential. Training will be given, no healthcare experience necessary. Medicys Limited, Broad Oak Enterprise Centre,Broad Oak Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8AQ.
To apply/more information:
Medicys Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email info@medicysltd.co.uk

Agriculture, Forestry, Environment

Gardener
Orpington
Salary: TBA
Xseed Landscape Maintenance Ltd A position is available for a gardener. Applicants must have a good knowledge/I.D of plants. The successful applicant will be dedicated, hardworking and a strong team player. C.V and references are required. Please contact 01689 860096
To apply/more information:
Xseed
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01689 860096
Email greg@xseed.co.uk

Art and Design

Senior Reprographics Technician
Rochester
Salary: £16,614 - £21,937
Closing Date: Wednesday 18 March 2009
To apply/more information:
Mr S. Rayner
Thomas Aveling School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 844809
Email
office@thomasaveling.co.uk

Catering, Hospitality

Kitchen Assistants
Dover
Salary: £16,506 rising to £18,055 pa
Closing Date: 27th March 2009
To apply/more information:
HM Prison Service
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email kent-sussex-area-recruitment@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

Child Care

Key Person
Maidstone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Friday 3rd April 2009
To apply/more information:
Kings Hill Pre School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 840180
Email
info@kingshillpreschool.co.uk

Hotfoot Summer Play Schemes and Sports Coaching Opportunities
Maidstone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: See above
To apply/more information:
Maidstone Borough Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 602555 + 01622 602222
Email sportsandplay@maidstone.gov.uk

Customer Service, Call Centre

CUSTOMER SERVICE PERSON
Rochester
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Saturday 4th April
To apply/more information:
Niall O'Kane Optometrist
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email
applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Domestic

Night Cleaners
Canterbury
Salary: £6.42 per hour
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: 08/22
Tel: 01227 811282
Email
applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Education, Teacher, School

Kent County Council

To learn about teaching careers in Kent, visit
www.kent-teach.com

Occupational Therapist
Margate
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Friday 27th March 2009
To apply/more information:
Royal School for Deaf Children

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JobsforKent.co.uk

Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 222454
Email swebb@royalschoolfordeaf.kent.sch.uk

14-19 Programme Manager
Canterbury
Salary: Up tp £31,000 pa
Closing Date: 25 March 2009
To apply/more information:
Amacsports Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 831840
Email info@amactraining.co.uk

Speech and Language Therapist
Medway
Salary: £26,706 - £34,107 pro rata
Closing Date: 1 April 2009
To apply/more information:
Mrs Linda Taylor
Abbey Court School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 338224
Email tayll036@medway.org.uk

Lecturer Administration to Level 3 and Cross College Key Skills
Isle of Sheppey
Salary: £18,387 - £26,363 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: 08/73
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Coordinator Independent Living and Leisure Skills
Canterbury
Salary: £27,209 pro rata
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: 09/10
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Supply Lecturer Dental Nursing
Canterbury
Salary: £18,387 to £26,363 Pro Rata
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: S/DN
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Supply NVQ Assessors - Community Development
Canterbury
Salary: £18,295 - £26,232 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: S/NVQ/CD
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Supply NVQ Assessors - Play Work
Canterbury
Salary: £18,295 - £26,232 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: S/NVQ/PW
Tel: 01227 811282
Email appl

Supply NVQ Assessors - Early Years
Canterbury
Salary: £18,295 - £26,232 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: S/NVQ/EY
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Higher Education Curriculum Development Officer
Canterbury
Salary: £33,858 PA
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: CDO/HE
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Project Co-Ordinator - College Redevelopment Officer
Canterbury
Salary: £18,963 pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: 08/117
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Curriculum Support Assistant - Engineering and Construction
Canterbury
Salary: £18,963 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: 08/148
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Learning support Independant Living and Leisure Skills
Canterbury
Salary: £16,914 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: LS18
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Trainer Demonstrator Public Services
Canterbury
Salary: £18,963 pro rata pa
Closing Date: Monday 30 March 2009 at 12 Noon
To apply/more information:
Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: 08/140
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

SCIENCE TECHNICIAN
Gravesend
Salary: £16,793-£18,471 pro-rata
Closing Date: Tuesday 31 March 2009
To apply/more information:
St George's CoE School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01474 533082
Email dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk

Teacher of German
Rochester
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Wednesday 25th March 2009
found to be "exemplary". If you are interested in applying for this post, then please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs Jacqueline Harrison, or visit out website www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk We are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check. Closing date for applications – Wednesday 25th March 2009.
To apply/more information:
Mrs Jacqueline Harrison
Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 844008
Email harrisonj@sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

Vacancies filled fast online with
JobsforKent.co.uk
To advertise in this section or online
✆ 01303 817040

Leader of Post 16 Education (or 14-19 Curriculum)
Dartford
Salary: Upper or Main Spine plus TLR 1c (£8,611)
Closing Date: Tuesday 31 March 2009
Our school is undergoing an exciting rebuild as part of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and our approach to learning is creative and concerted, with buildings reflecting our vision. Our Sixth Form numbers some 120 students. We work collaboratively with all our local secondary schools and North West Kent College, attracting both male and female students. Some courses and our new diplomas are shared across the Gravesham collaboration and with KS4. These include A level Media and Photography, English and Psychology through to the Business & Finance and Society Health & Development diplomas. We have a reputation for leading innovation for offering a wide and varied range of courses at all levels. You would be leading a team of well qualified tutors and teachers to build on our current success but challenge us to move forward. Our Leader of Post 16 Education is ably supported by our Post 16 Co-Ordinator. As a clear thinking, good team player who is innovative and enthusiastic about learning post 16 and its future development you wil also be a highly qualified and leading practitioner. For further information please contact Mrs T Davies or Mrs S Chisholm Northfleet School for Girls, Hall Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8AQ Tel: 0844 477 2525 email:personnel@northfleetgirls.kent.sch.uk
To apply/more information:
Northfleet School for Girls
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0844 477 2525
Email personnel@northfleetgirls.kent.sch.uk

General Teaching Vacancies
Dartford
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Tuesday 31 March 2009
General Teaching Vacancies at Northfleet School for Girls: P.E. – History – Geography – Science – Media – English NQT or Part time applications will be considered For further information please contact Mrs T Davies or Mrs S Chisholm Northfleet School for Girls, Hall Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8AQ Tel: 0844 477 2525 email:personnel@northfleetgirls.kent.sch.uk
To apply/more information:
Northfleet School for Girls
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0844 477 2525
Email personnel@northfleetgirls.kent.sch.uk

Health and Social Care Assessor/IV
Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Full and part time roles available. Car driver essential. Minimum two years experience at a senior level. NVQ level 3 or 4 - D32, D33, D34, A1 V1 desirable. Excellent pay plus benefits. Ongoing CPD support. Excellent Team environment. Please send CV with covering letter to Jeanette Fortescue @ UKE Learning, j.fortescue@ukelearning.com or recruitment@ukelearning.com
To apply/more information:
UK E Learning
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email j.fortescue@ukelearning.com

Engineering, Manufacturing, Utilities

Workshop Controllers
Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Experience Essential Brownhills Motorhomes Limited is well known and established in the UK and enjoys the status of being Britian's largest motorhome distributor boasting 6 sites of which Canterbury is one, with a portfolio that includes no less than 15 different manfacturers offering a staggering choice of 750 interior layouts. At Brownhills, we recognise that the dedication and effort of our team towards providing excellence in customer service is the reason for its success. We in turn pledge our support to staff by providing career, self development and training opportunities. We would like to invite you to a Recruitment Evening on Monday 16th March from 6pm - 9pm at Howfield Lane, Canterbury Brownhills Motorhomes offer excellent working conditions, a competitive salary, generous holidays and are committed to equal opportunities.
To apply/more information:
Brownhills Motorhomes
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Electrical Maintenance Technician
Medway
Salary: £15,057 - £19,127 per annum
Closing Date: Friday 3 April 2009
The successful candidate will assist the Maintenance Manager in the maintenance and repair of electrical systems and carry-out testing, servicing and minor works, including replacement of electrical installations, fire and lighting systems. The applicant will be a qualified electrician and conversant with the 16th and/or 17th Edition Wiring Regulations. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. Mid-Kent College is an equal opportunities employer.
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0070
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

ELECTRICIANS
Dartford
Salary: TBA
REQUIRES ELECTRICAL FOREMAN JIB Approved CSCS Cardholders Applicants to have proven experience in supervisory capacity JIB Approved CSCS Cardholders Applicants must have commercial experience Long term contracts and good rates of pay Please send CV to Mr B M Woodley, Gee-Bec Services Ltd Unit 5 Maplehurst Close, Dartford, Kent DA2 7WX For application form ring 01322 621455.
To apply/more information:
Mr B M Woodley
Gee-Bec Services Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01322 621455
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Folding setter operator
Ashford
Salary: TBA
CCL Label is the leading global supplier of decorative, informational and promotional labels to the world's largest healthcare, consumer and agrochemical companies. Our plants deploy leading-edge technologies to provide customers with innovative and secure labelling solutions. One Folding setter operator with experience of operating large format folding machines. Salary will be dependent on experience. Candidates applying for the Plate-maker or Quality technician positions would ideally have some experience in similar roles, but trainee positions will also be considered. For more information, request application form or send your C.V. please contact: Human Resources Manager, CCL Label (Ashford) Limited, Foster Road, Ashford Business Park, Sevington, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0SH Tel: 01233 503333 or email: GMorgan@cclind.com
To apply/more information:
CCL Label (Ashford) Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 503333
Email GMorgan@cclind.com

Plate-maker
Ashford
Salary: TBA
CCL Label is the leading global supplier of decorative, informational and promotional labels to the world's largest healthcare, consumer and agrochemical companies. Our plants deploy leading-edge technologies to provide customers with innovative and secure labelling solutions. One Plate-maker to join our Studio team, role mainly consists of making and checking printing plates before going to press. Salary will be dependent on experience. Candidates applying for the Plate-maker or Quality technician positions would ideally have some experience in similar roles, but trainee positions will also be considered. For more information, request application form or send your C.V. please contact: Human Resources Manager, CCL Label (Ashford) Limited, Foster Road, Ashford Business Park, Sevington, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0SH Tel: 01233 503333 or email: GMorgan@cclind.com
To apply/more information:
CCL Label (Ashford) Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 503333
Email GMorgan@cclind.com

Health & Safety, Security, Defense

Door Supervisors
Kent
Salary: TBA
Require SIA Licensed Door Supervisors at Various Holiday Parks within the Kent Area Please Call Chris on 01277 355088 or E MAIL CV to Doorbird1957@aol.com Immediate Start available.
To apply/more information:
Chris
FSL Limited
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01277 355088
Email Doorbird1957@aol.com

Information Tech, Internet, Telecoms

ICT Technician
Folkestone
Salary: £16,627 - £18,288 PA
Closing Date: Friday 3 April 2009
Hours: 8am - 4pm, Monday to Friday This post requires an advanced computer user and involves performing basic diagnostic and recovery routines on network equipment, performing basic PC hardware repairs and upgrades. Implementing and suggesting improvements to school backup, virus protection and security policies. Tracking expenditure against an agreed budget and purchasing lower value items. The candidate will also produce instruction sheets and help train and advise both staff and pupils. Are you self motivated, good at problem solving, customer focused and have a sense of humour? If so, we want to hear from you. Previous experience of working as an ICT technician or similar role is required. Required to work some Saturdays in exchange for a weekday when requested. For more information adn an application pack please contact: Miss S Spratley, Pent Valley Technology College, Surrenden Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4ED Email or call.
To apply/more information:
Pent Vally Tech
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 277161 ext 2218
Email samantha.spratley@pent-valley.kent.sch.uk

Insurance, Banking, Finance

Finance Assistant
Margate
Salary: £14k - £15k pro rata
Closing Date: Thursday 26 March 2009
Kay House, Margate 30-37 hours per week, Pro-rata £14 - £15k per annum dependant on experience Thanet Leisureforce Ltd has a vacancy for an experienced Finance Assistant to work at their Head Office in Margate. Applicants must have finance/office experience, be motivated, a good team player and have a strong attention to detail. The post is available on a 6 month fixed term contract with a view to developing into a permanent post. Interested? For a full job description and application form please call 01843 227959.
To apply/more information:
Thanet Leisure Force
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 227959
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Management, Senior Positions

Head of Teaching and Quality Assurance
Medway
Salary: £50k package
Closing Date: 1st April 2009
MKC Training Services wish to appoint a Head of Teaching to oversee the Self Assessment Report and Quality Assurance Programme across the trade, technical and professional construction & engineering military training school at Brompton Barracks. Reporting to the Managing Director, you will be joining this exciting organisation as it commences a 30 year contract with the British Army and you will be a key player in implementing new practice and process to maintain & improve the current high standard of teaching across the school. You will have a good standard of written and oral English and have the ability to engage positively with teaching staff and students. You will be able to demonstrate a track record of promoting change and continuous improvement in a training/education environment and provide examples where you have raised the quality of teaching in previous roles. Candidates should hold a relevant teaching qualification or have the appropriate experience. This is a senior and responsible appointment which will have significant influence on the future success of the contract and will ensure a high standard of training for the Military Engineer. To forward your CV and/or request a job description and application pack, please contact Ken Pullan ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk or call 07725 128661 for an informal discussion.
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: KOS
Tel: 07725 128661
Email ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk

Marketing, Advertising

Market Researchers
Chislehurst
Salary: TBA
The Business Advantage Group plc. requires Market Researchers (English and foreign speakers) EVENING Project work Excellent telephone manner Previous market research experience essential Office based – Petts Wood Competitive rates stevie.marrett@business-advantage.com
To apply/more information:
Business Advantage Group plc
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email stevie.marrett@business-advantage.com

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To advertise in this section or online
✆ 01303 817040

Motor Trade, Driver

HGV Class 2 Drivers
Maidstone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 23rd March 2009
Join our successful business! Recruiting now at our Paddock Wood Site 48.0 hours per week Competitive Salary HGV Class 2 Driver for an immediate start. Lorry mounted crane licence is essential. Recovery (streetlifter) or transporter experience is desirable. Full training & uniform supplied. Good rates of pay + benefits To Apply: Phone Suzy in Human Resources on 01202 744194 ext 226 Or email suzy@ctrent.co.uk to send in your CV or request an application form. Closing date for application 23rd March 2009
To apply/more information:
Charles Trent Vehicle Management
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01202 744194 ext 226
Email suzy@ctrent.co.uk

Fully Skilled Technician
Dartford
Salary: TBA
Fully skilled technician with predominately main dealer experience required to join our award winning team at Whitehouse Crayford. Chrysler Jeep experience preferable but not essential as training will be provided. Please forward your CV to Tim Collier, Aftersales Manager via email or post to Unit D Acorn Industrial Park, Crayford Road, Dartford, Kent DA1 4AL. No Agencies.
To apply/more information:
Whitehouse Jeep (Crayford)
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email tim.collier@whitehousegroup.co.uk

Technicians
Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Mechanical, Electrical and PDi Technicians required to carry out servicing and parts fitting in a safe and economical manner with previous experience required at our busy workshop on the outskirts of Canterbury. Brownhills Motorhomes Limited is well known and established in the UK and enjoys the status of being Britian's largest motorhome distributor boasting 6 sites of which Canterbury is one, with a portfolio that includes no less than 15 different manfacturers offering a staggering choice of 750 interior layouts. At Brownhills, we recognise that the dedication and effort of our team towards providing excellence in customer service is the reason for its success. We in turn pledge our support to staff by providing career, self development and training opportunities. We would like to invite you to a Recruitment Evening on Monday 16th March from 6pm - 9pm at Howfield Lane, Canterbury Brownhills Motorhomes offer excellent working conditions, a competitive salary, generous holidays and are committed to equal opportunities.
To apply/more information:
Brownhills Motorhomes
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Nursing, Medicine, Care Work

Music/Play Worker – Disability Specialist
Ashford
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 31 March 2009
Pie Factory Music are seeking a creative and energetic individual with enthusiasm for a range of musical styles to work across East Kent with disabled children and young people, involving them in creating music. You will plan and deliver a wide range of music making sessions, courses and play activities for children with a range of abilities. This will include the use of specialist sound beam equipment (training provided). You will be qualified to NVQ3 in music/youth/play work or equivalent. Previous experience with disabled children preferred. You will need to be mobile and able to deliver sessions across East Kent. Skills in non-verbal communications systems, e.g. BSL, Makaton, PECS, etc ., would be an advantage. For more information and an application pack, please call Steve Kreeger on 01843 596777 or e-mail steve@piefactorymusic.com. To find out more about Pie Factory Music, visit www.piefactorymusic.com
To apply/more information:
Pie Factory Music
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 596777
Email steve@piefactorymusic.com

Is your CV up to date?
take advantage of a free online CV review

Floating Support Workers

Kent
Salary: £20,374 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KFSW DAW
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

Floating Support Workers

Kent
Salary: £20,374 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
West Kent - Substance Misuse Carr-Gomm is an award winning charity, set up in 1965 to provide high quality housing, care and support. We offer a wide range of services to over 4,000 people each year, including floating support to individuals in their own homes, in accommodation that we provide, and day services. We have succcessfully won five new contracts, supporting disadvantaged people across the county, and need to build our teams in the region. These challenging and rewarding roles will see you providing support using Person Centered Planning tools to people so that they can maintain their accommodation and live independantly within their own homes. Floating support workers will need experience of working with people from the specific client group/s for each service, knowledge of welfare benefits system and relevant legisaltion. Meanwhile Support Assistants will need experience of working with vulnerable or disadvantaged people within their community, and knowledge of the welfare benefits system. These roles will require frequent travel throughout the county. We expect all of our staff to share our committment to service user involvement and the importance of diversity to the organisation. Benefits include an excellent pension scheme and five weeks holiday per annum. Carr-Gomm is committed to equal opportunities. Download an application pack from www.carr-gomm.org.uk Alternatively email us as jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk quoting the reference. NO CV'S ACCEPTED
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KFSW SMW
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

Floating Support Workers

Kent
Salary: £20,374 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
West Kent - Alcohol Carr-Gomm is an award winning charity, set up in 1965 to provide high quality housing, care and support. We offer a wide range of services to over 4,000 people each year, including floating support to individuals in their own homes, in accommodation that we provide, and day services. We have succcessfully won five new contracts, supporting disadvantaged people across the county, and need to build our teams in the region. These challenging and rewarding roles will see you providing support using Person Centered Planning tools to people so that they can maintain their accommodation and live independantly within their own homes. Floating support workers will need experience of working with people from the specific client group/s for each service, knowledge of welfare benefits system and relevant legisaltion. Meanwhile Support Assistants will need experience of working with vulnerable or disadvantaged people within their community, and knowledge of the welfare benefits system. These roles will require frequent travel throughout the county. We expect all of our staff to share our committment to service user involvement and the importance of diversity to the organisation. Benefits include an excellent pension scheme and five weeks holiday per annum. Carr-Gomm is committed to equal opportunities. Download an application pack from www.carr-gomm.org.uk Alternatively email us as jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk quoting the reference. NO CV'S ACCEPTED
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KFSW ALW
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

Floating Support Workers

Kent
Salary: £20,374 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
East Kent - Substance Misuse Carr-Gomm is an award winning charity, set up in 1965 to provide high quality housing, care and support. We offer a wide range of services to over 4,000 people each year, including floating support to individuals in their own homes, in accommodation that we provide, and day services. We have succcessfully won five new contracts, supporting disadvantaged people across the county, and need to build our teams in the region. These challenging and rewarding roles will see you providing support using Person Centered Planning tools to people so that they can maintain their accommodation and live independantly within their own homes. Floating support workers will need experience of working with people from the specific client group/s for each service, knowledge of welfare benefits system and relevant legisaltion. Meanwhile Support Assistants will need experience of working with vulnerable or disadvantaged people within their community, and knowledge of the welfare benefits system. These roles will require frequent travel throughout the county. We expect all of our staff to share our committment to service user involvement and the importance of diversity to the organisation. Benefits include an excellent pension scheme and five weeks holiday per annum. Carr-Gomm is committed to equal opportunities. Download an application pack from www.carr-gomm.org.uk Alternatively email us as jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk quoting the reference. NO CV'S ACCEPTED
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KSA DAW
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

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To advertise in this section or online
01303 817040

Floating Support Assistants - Substance Misuse, Alcohol

Kent
Salary: £13,434 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
West Kent Carr-Gomm is an award winning charity, set up in 1965 to provide high quality housing, care and support. We offer a wide range of services to over 4,000 people each year, including floating support to individuals in their own homes, in accommodation that we provide, and day services. We have succcessfully won five new contracts, supporting disadvantaged people across the county, and need to build our teams in the region. These challenging and rewarding roles will see you providing support using Person Centered Planning tools to people so that they can maintain their accommodation and live independantly within their own homes. Floating support workers will need experience of working with people from the specific client group/s for each service, knowledge of welfare benefits system and relevant legisaltion. Meanwhile Support Assistants will need experience of working with vulnerable or disadvantaged people within their community, and knowledge of the welfare benefits system. These roles will require frequent travel throughout the county. We expect all of our staff to share our committment to service user involvement and the importance of diversity to the organisation. Benefits include an excellent pension scheme and five weeks holiday per annum. Carr-Gomm is committed to equal opportunities. Download an application pack from www.carr-gomm.org.uk Alternatively email us as jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk quoting the reference. NO CV'S ACCEPTED
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KSFW SM/YPE
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

Floating Support Assistants - Women Fleeing domestic abuse

Kent
Salary: £13,434 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
West Kent, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Malling Carr-Gomm is an award winning charity, set up in 1965 to provide high quality housing, care and support. We offer a wide range of services to over 4,000 people each year, including floating support to individuals in their own homes, in accommodation that we provide, and day services. We have succcessfully won five new contracts, supporting disadvantaged people across the county, and need to build our teams in the region. These challenging and rewarding roles will see you providing support using Person Centered Planning tools to people so that they can maintain their accommodation and live independantly within their own homes. Floating support workers will need experience of working with people from the specific client group/s for each service, knowledge of welfare benefits system and relevant legisaltion. Meanwhile Support Assistants will need experience of working with vulnerable or disadvantaged people within their community, and knowledge of the welfare benefits system. These roles will require frequent travel throughout the county. We expect all of our staff to share our committment to service user involvement and the importance of diversity to the organisation. Benefits include an excellent pension scheme and five weeks holiday per annum. Carr-Gomm is committed to equal opportunities. Download an application pack from www.carr-gomm.org.uk Alternatively email us as jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk quoting the reference. NO CV'S ACCEPTED
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KSA ALW
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

Floating Support Assistants - Substance Misuse and young people at risk

Kent
Salary: £13,434 pa
Closing Date: 3 April 2009
West Kent, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Malling - Women fleeing domestic abuse Carr-Gomm is an award winning charity, set up in 1965 to provide high quality housing, care and support. We offer a wide range of services to over 4,000 people each year, including floating support to individuals in their own homes, in accommodation that we provide, and day services. We have succcessfully won five new contracts, supporting disadvantaged people across the county, and need to build our teams in the region. These challenging and rewarding roles will see you providing support using Person Centered Planning tools to people so that they can maintain their accommodation and live independantly within their own homes. Floating support workers will need experience of working with people from the specific client group/s for each service, knowledge of welfare benefits system and relevant legisaltion. Meanwhile Support Assistants will need experience of working with vulnerable or disadvantaged people within their community, and knowledge of the welfare benefits system. These roles will require frequent travel throughout the county. We expect all of our staff to share our committment to service user involvement and the importance of diversity to the organisation. Benefits include an excellent pension scheme and five weeks holiday per annum. Carr-Gomm is committed to equal opportunities. Download an application pack from www.carr-gomm.org.uk Alternatively email us as jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk quoting the reference. NO CV'S ACCEPTED
To apply/more information: Carrgomm
Quoting Job Ref: KSA SM/YPE
Email jobs@carr-gomm.org.uk

Night Staff

Ashford
Salary: TBA
Night Staff Required – Dementia Care Home, Southborough, Kent Night care staff required 2-3 days per week for work at care home for the elderly with dementia. Contact Katherine: 01892 535346
To apply/more information: Katherine
Regal Care Homes
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01892 535346

Sessional Assessors

Whitstable
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 31st March 2009
To apply/more information: Enterprising Opportunities
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 265 899 (opt 3)
Email r.hawking@enterprisingopps.org.uk

Public Relations, Media, Journalism

EDUCATION and YOUTH PROJECTS CO-ORDINATOR

Folkestone
Salary: £18,000 - £22,000 Pro Rata
Closing Date: 26 March 2009 Up to 28 hours per week Fixed Term Contract A Media Box Supported Role **Closing Date:** 26 March 2009 Interviews will be held on: 06 April 2009 For job specification or further information please see our website www.screensouth.org or contact Vanessa Cook Please send current CV and letter of motivation including where you saw the ad to vanessa.cook@screensouth.org or Screen South The Wedge 75 – 81 Tontine Street Folkestone Kent CT20 1JR T: 01303 259 777 F: 01303 259 786. www.screensouth.org
To apply/more information: Vanessa Cook
Screen South
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email vanessa.cook@screensouth.org

FILM COMMISSION ASSISTANT

Kent
Salary: £14,000 - £16,000
Closing Date: 01 April 2009 Interviews will be held on: 09 April 2009 This position is based at Pinewoods Studios, Buckinghamshire For job specification or further information please see our website www.screensouth.org or contact Vanessa Cook Please send current CV and letter of motivation Screen South The Wedge 75 – 81 Tontine Street Folkestone Kent CT20 1JR T: 01303 259 777 F: 01303 259 786. www.screensouth.org
To apply/more information: Vanessa Cook
Screen South
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email vanessa.cook@screensouth.org

Media Technician

Medway
Salary: £11,599 - £17,200 pro-rata
Closing Date: Friday 27 March 2009
18.5 hours per week for 38 weeks The Media department is currently looking to expand its provision at Oakwood Park and as a direct result is looking to appoint a Technician to join the team. The ideal candidate will be able to provide technical support to staff and students and will be responsible for setting-up and providing classroom support. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. Mid-Kent College is an equal opportunities employer.
To apply/more information: Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P1001
Tel: 01634 884402
Email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Retail, Wholesale, Sales

Marketing Executives

Maidstone
Salary: £300 - £400 weekly
Unemployment blues? If so then we have a unique opportunity for well presented articulate candidates to train as Marketing Executives. You will be required to make house calls door to door and talk to Home Owners with a view to making appointments for a FREE HOME SURVEY offering advice on low cost building maintainence. No Selling involved. Field training is carried out during daylight hours. Initially on a part time basis between 10 & 2 pm or 4 & 8pm. Are you financially motivated, persuasive and above all up for a challenge? Then the skys the limit £300 - £400 weekly Call us now on free phone 0800 44 88 990.
To apply/more information: Treat ExWall
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0800 44 88 990
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Sales Agents

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 26 March 2009
To apply/more information: Saga
Quoting Job Ref: SG283/KOS
Tel: 01303 774888
Email human.resources@saga.co.uk

Service Delivery Agents

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 26 March 2009
Competitive salaries + commission and excellent benefits package Listening to customers. Taking the time to understand their needs. Building a real rapport with them. That's what we call doing things properly for our customers as we deliver great service. And if you can help us achieve that, we'll do things properly for you too. That means excellent training and development at every stage as well as unlimited earnings potential. What's more, it means a friendly working environment plus all the training and support you need to do a terrific job. The question is, have you got what it takes to be part of this fast-growing group of companies? You'll need to be target driven and able to rise to new challenges, that's for sure. But above all you must share our committment to getting things right. Every time. If it's time for you to enjoy the rewards you deserve please e-mail your CV to: human.resources@saga.co.uk Alternatively, please call 01303 774888 for an application form or download one from our website. Please quote the reference. www.saga.co.uk
To apply/more information: Saga
Quoting Job Ref: SG283/KOS
Tel: 01303 774888
Email human.resources@saga.co.uk

Sales Executives

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Brownhills Motorhomes Limited is well known and established in the UK and enjoys the status of being Britian's largest motorhome distributor boasting 6 sites of which Canterbury is one, with a portfolio that includes no less than 15 different manfacturers offering a staggering choice of 750 interior layouts. At Brownhills, we recognise that the dedication and effort of our team towards providing excellence in customer service is the reason for its success. We in turn pledge our support to staff by providing career, self development and training opportunities. We would like to invite you to a Recruitment Evening on Monday 16th March from 6pm - 9pm at Howfield Lane, Canterbury Brownhills Motorhomes offer excellent working conditions, a competitive salary, generous holidays and are committed to equal opportunities.
To apply/more information: Brownhills Motorhomes
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Telemarketers

Orpington
Salary: £7.50 per hour
We require two telemarketers working from home to phone customers on behalf of our clients in the motor trade, mainly early evening, £7.50 per hour, flexibility with working hours is essential. Send your CV including a hand written covering letter to: PO Box 680 Orpington BR6 8WS
To apply/more information: Big Blue Banana
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Insolvency Act 1986
WC (UK) LIMITED
Company Number 5733958
Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named Company will be held at Corinthian House, 17 Landsdowne Road, Croydon, CR0 2BX, on 26 March 2009, at 11.30 am for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 to 101 of the said Act: To have laid before it a statement as to the affairs on the company, to nominate one or more Insolvency Practitioners as liquidator or liquidators; and if thought fit, to establish a liquidation committee.
A list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors may be inspected, free of charge, at Corinthian House, 17 Landsdowne Road, Croydon, CR0 2BX between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting stated above. Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must (unless they are individual creditors attending in person) lodge their proxy, together with a full statement of account at the registered office - 16/17 Boundary Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 4AN, not later than 12.00 noon on 25 March 2009. Proxy forms are available.
Unless there are exceptional circumstances, a creditor will not be entitled to vote unless his proof has been lodged and admited for voting purposes. A proof may be lodged by submitting a written statement of claim clearly setting out the name and address of the creditor and the amount claimed. Whilst proofs may be lodged at any time before voting commences, creditors intending to vote at the meeting are requested to send proofs with their proxies. Unless they surrender their security, secured creditors must give particulars of their security, the date when it was given and the value at which it is assessed, if they wish to vote at the meeting.
Dated: 12 March 2009
By Order of the Board
Ivor Swatton, Director

The Insolvency Act 1986
GRANITE WORKTOPS DIRECT LIMITED
Company Number 05057444
Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of creditors of the above-named Company will be held at Kent House, Romney Place, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6LH, on 31 March 2009, at 10.30 am for the purpose of having a full statement of the position of the company's affairs, together with a list of creditors of the company and the estimated amount of their claims, laid before them, and for the purpose, if thought fit, of nominating a liquidator and of appointing a Liquidation Committee pursuant to Sections 99 to 101 of the Insolvency Act 1986. The resolutions to be taken at the meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the liquidator is to be remunerated in terms of fees and disbursements (including those as categorised in the Statement of Insolvency Practice 9, Category 2) and a Resolution conferring upon the duly appointed Liquidator the powers contained in Schedule 4 Part 1 of the Insolvency Act 1986. The meeting may receive information about, and be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. Notice is also hereby given, pursuant to Section 98(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a list of the names and addresses of the company's creditors may be examined free of charge at the offices of Atherton Bailey at the above address, between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days prior to the day of the meeting. To be entitled to vote creditors must lodge a full statement of account and unless claiming personally they must also submit a form of proxy which, if intended to be used, must be duly completed and lodged at the registered office of the company at the above address not later than 12.00 noon on the business day before the meeting. Unless they surrender their security Secured creditors, if they wish to vote at the meeting, must also lodge full details of their security and its assessed value.
Dated 17 March 2009
By Order of the Board
Robert Ford, Director

J A P ENGINEERING LIMITED
Company Number 05994546
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named Company will be held on Monday 6th April 2009 at 10.15 am at Judd House, 16 East Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HG for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act.
Forms of proxy to be used at the Meeting, accompanied by a statement of claim, must be lodged at the offices of Vantis Business Recovery Services, Judd House, 16 East Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HG, the Registered Office of the company, not later than 12.00 noon on Friday 3rd April 2009.
Mark Newman of Vantis Business Recovery Services, Judd House, 16 East Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HG, is a person qualified to act as an insolvency practitioner in relation to the company who, during the period before the day on which the meeting is to be held, will furnish creditors free of charge, with such information concerning the company's affairs as they may reasonably require.
By Order of the Board
Alan William Watkins, Director
Dated: 16th March 2009

AMAZON HAIRDRESSING LIMITED
Company Number 03940122
Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the Company will be held at 1st Floor, Victory House, Quayside, Chatham Maritime, Kent, ME4 4QU, on Tuesday 31 March 2009, at 11.00 am for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 to 101 of the said Act. Resolutions to be taken at the Meeting may include a Resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated, and the Meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the Meeting. Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must lodge their proxy, together with a full statement of account at the above address, not later than 12.00 noon on the business day preceding the meeting. For the purposes of voting, a secured creditor is required (unless he surrenders his security) to lodge a statement at the above address before the meeting, giving particulars of his security, the date when it was given and the value at which it is assessed. Notice is further given that a list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors may be inspected, free of charge, at the above address between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting stated above.
Dated 11 February 2009
Neal Metcalf, Director

M DALE LIMITED
(Company No: 05369010)
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the Company will be held at 1st Floor, Victory House, Quayside, Chatham Maritime, Kent, ME4 4QU on Thursday, 9 April 2009 at 11.00 am for the purposes mentioned in Section 99 to 101 of the said Act. Resolutions to be taken at the meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the Liquidator is to be remunerated, and the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must lodge their proxy, together with a full statement of account at 1st Floor, Victory House, Quayside, Chatham Maritime, Kent, ME4 4QU not later than 12.00 noon on the business day preceding the meeting. For the purposes of voting, a secured creditor is required (unless he surrenders his security) to lodge a statement at 1st Floor, Victory House, Quayside, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4QU before the meeting, giving particulars of his security, the date when it was given and the value at which it is assessed. Notice is further given that a list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors may be inspected, free of charge, at 1st Floor, Victory House, Quayside, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4QU between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting stated above.
Date: 12 March 2009
Mark Dale, Director

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Highways - District of Ashford

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(WHITE HILL, BOUGHTON ALUPH) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of BT works to clear blockages in ducts, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on White Hill, Boughton Aluph, between the junctions with the A28 Canterbury Road and A251 Faversham Road, on 6 April 2009 for an estimated period of three weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via A28 Canterbury Road, Wye Road and A251 Faversham Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, CHARING) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of works to install duct crossing through the carriageway, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on School Road, Charing on or after 6 April 2009 for one week, and Old Ashford Road, Charing on or after 13 April 2009 for one week. Each road will be closed between its junction with A20 Maidstone Road and The High Street.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via A20 Maidstone Road and The High Street.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(A28 ASHFORD ROAD, CHILHAM) (TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the liklihood of danger to the public and workforce whilst the construction of a new water main is carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order on the A28 Ashford Road, Chilham for a distance of 350 metres alongside East Stour Farm. The effect of the Order is to impose a temporary mandatory 10 mph speed restriction within the roadworks, which will be operated by means of a "convoy" when the roadworks are taking place.

The order will become effective on or after 23 March 2009 for an estimated period of 6 weeks or until the works are complete. The order will only be in force at specific times when works are to be carried out. At these times, the appropriate signs and temporary traffic signals will be displayed on site.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(DYNES LANE, BILSINGTON) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of a new electrical supply, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Dynes Lane, Bilsington from the junction with Stone Cross Road and the junction with Ashford Road, on or after 25 March 2009, for an estimated period of 2 weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Stone Cross Road and Ashford Road.

Highways - District of Canterbury

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(COVET LANE, KINGSTON) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that to enable BT to carry out tree cutting and cable renewal, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Covet Lane, Kingston, between Little Duskin Farm and Duskin Farm from 6 April 2009 for an estimated period of three days or until such works are complete. The work is scheduled to be carried out between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm with the road re-opened outside these hours.

The alternative route for through traffic will be: westbound via Black Robin Lane, Bonny Bush Hill, The Street, Marley Lane and Turks Hill; eastbound via Cole Hill, Greenhills and Valley Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, CANTERBURY) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Carriageway Surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on various roads, Canterbury from as described in column 1 of the schedule to this order on or after 6 April 2009 for an estimated period of as described in column 3 of the schedule to this order or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via as described in column 2 of the schedule to this order.

The Affected Route	The Alternative Route	Date & Times of Road Closure
Vauxhall Road, Canterbury Junction with Sturry Road	Vauxhall Road, Broad Oak Road, Kingsmead Road and Sturry Road	6 - 7 April 2009 (20:00 - 05:00)
Wincheap	Westbound to use Thanington slip road, A2 Dover Road, Bridge slip road, Bekesbourne Road, Roman Road, New Dover Road, St Georges Place, Upper Bridge Street, Rhodaus Town and Pin Hill. Eastbound to use St Georges Place, New Dover Road, Bridge slip road, Bekesbourne Road, A2 Dover Road, Thanington slip road and Wincheap.	8 -9 April 2009 inclusive (20:00 - 05:00)
South Street, Whitstable Rosemary Gardens to Brooklands Farm	Chestfield Road, Thanet Way and Millstrood Road	21 - 26 April 2009 (19:00 - 02:00)
Station Road, Adisham	Love Lane and Bossington Road	27 April - 28 April 2009 inclusive (08:00 - 18:00)
St Stephens Hill, Canterbury	Giles Lane, St Thomas Hill, Whitstable Road, Forty Acres Road and Beaconsfield Road	16 - 22 July 2009 inclusive (20:00 - 05:00)
Shalmsford Street, Chartham (A28 to The Crescent) Works in three phases 1. A28 - Bolts Hill 2. Bolts Hill - Bakers Lane 3. Bakers Lane - The Crescent	1. Ashford Road, Rattington Street, The Green, Parish Road, Bolts Hill. 2. Bolts Hill, Parish Road, Rattington Street and Bakers Lane. 3. Bakers Lane, Rattington Street, Cockering Road and The Downs. HGV diversion route for all phases: A28, Milton Manor Road and Cockering Road.	20 - 29 July 2009 (08:00 - 18:00)

Highways - District of Dover

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(WELLINGTON ROAD, DEAL) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because gas main works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Wellington Road, Deal from outside 22 Wellington Road to the junction of Victoria Road on or after 23 March 2009 for an estimated period of 7 days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Blenheim Road, Gilford Road, Victoria Road, Ranelagh Road, Prince of Wales Terrace and South Street.

Specified Road	Length of road affected	Alternative routes
Wellington Road	From outside 22 Wellington Road to the junction of Victoria Road.	Blenheim Road, Gilford Road, Victoria Road, Ranelagh Road, Prince of Wales Terrace and South Street.
Wellington Road	Suspension of existing one way traffic order between Blenheim Road and Victoria Road.	N/A

Highways - Borough of Gravesham

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
DEAN LANE, MEOPHAM (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are being carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Dean Lane, Meopham between its junctions with Chandlers Lane and Harvel Street.

The Order will become effective on 6th April 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last for 2 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Harvel Street, David Street, Priestwood Road, Chandlers Road

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the renewal of an overhead Bt cable.

Highways - Borough of Maidstone

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(SEED ROAD, OTTERDEN) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Seed Road, Otterden, outside the Mid Kent Water pumping station on or after Monday 6th April 2009 for a period of up to 2 weeks or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for northbound traffic via Slade Road, Wyebanks Road, Walnut Tree Lane and for southbound traffic vice versa.

EDF Energy apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to install a new electricity supply, should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Emma Orsborne of Amber Langis Limited on 01474 573831.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(CHURCH ROAD, CHART SUTTON) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Church Road, Chart Sutton, between Sutton Valence Prep School and St Mitchells Church on or after Monday 6th April 2009 for a period of up to 2 weeks or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for northbound traffic via Chart Road, A274 North Street, Warmlake Road and for southbound traffic vice versa.

EDF Energy apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to install a new electricity supply, should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Emma Orsborne of Amber Langis Limited on 01474 573831.

Highways - District of Sevenoaks

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
WALTERS GREEN ROAD, FORDCOMBE (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY
ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are being carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Walters Green Road Fordcombe outside Hartlands Farm for a distance of 100m.

The Order will become effective on 6th April 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last for 3 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Chafford Lane, B2188 Spring Hill and Sandfield Road.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the replacement of a Bt Pole and reconnection of an overhead wire.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
GRANGE LANE, HARTLEY (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are being carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Grange Lane, Hartley between its junctions with Hartley Bottom Road and Church Road.

The Order will become effective on 6th April 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last for 2 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Church Road, Hartley Hill, Hartley Bottom Road.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate Water Mains Renewal Works.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
KNATTS LANE, WEST KINGSDOWN (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are being carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Knatts Lane, West Kingsdown between its junctions with Knatts Valley Road and School Lane.

The Order will become effective on 6th April 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last for 3 days between the hours of 09:30 and 15:30. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: School Lane, A20 London Road, Botsom Lane, Knatts Valley Road.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the replacement of a Bt Pole and reconnection of an overhead wire.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
OTFORD LANE, HALSTEAD (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are being carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Otford Lane, Halstead between its junctions with Halstead Lane and A224 Polhill.

The Order will become effective on 23rd March 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last for 1 week. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: A224 London Road, Shoreham Lane, Halstead Lane.

The purpose of the Order is to carriageway patching works to be undertaken by Kent Highway Services.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
A20 MAIN ROAD GORSE HILL, DONKEY LANE AND SCRATCHERS LANE, WEST KINGSDOWN, FAWKHAM & FARNINGHAM (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION AND RESTRICTION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst events are being held on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on A20 Main Road Gorse Hill between the Brands Hatch Main Entrance and the junction with Hever Road on the Cycleway only. This Order will restrict all vehicular traffic to travel at a speed not exceeding 30mph on A20 Main Road Gorse Hill between its junction with A225 Eynsford Road and the Texaco Petrol Station. This Order will prohibit all right turns onto and out from Donkey Lane at its junction with A20 Main Road Gorse Hill. This Order will also prohibit westbound traffic on Scratchers Lane between its junctions with A20 Main Road Gorse Hill and Three Gates Road.

The Order will become effective on 23rd March 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the prohibition and restrictions will apply on the dates and at the times as noted in Schedule 1 and when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative routes for the routes described above will be via:

Scratchers Lane: Westbound traffic will be directed via Fawkham Road and A20 Main Road Gorse Hill

Donkey Lane From A20: Continue A20 Main Road Gorse Hill then

Botsom Lane, Maplescombe Lane and then Donkey Lane.

From Donkey Lane onto A20 heading coastbound: Turn left onto A20 Main Road Gorse Hill to Kings Roundabout then

A20 Main Road Gorse Hill.

The purpose of the Order is to reduce traffic disruption whilst events are being held at Brands Hatch.

Schedule 1

Road and Restriction	Dates Applicable
A20 Main Road Gorse Hill (30mph Speed Limit)	29th March, 5th April, 13th April, 3rd May, 19th July, 9th August, 6th September, 4th October, 1st November
A20 Main Road Gorse Hill (Cycleway Closure)	29th March, 5th April, 13th April, 3rd May, 19th July, 9th August, 6th September, 4th October, 1st November
Donkey Lane (Prohibition of Right Turns)	29th March, 5th April, 13th April, 3rd May, 19th July, 9th August, 6th September, 4th October, 1st November
Scratchers Lane (One Way Order)	9th August

Highways - District of Swale

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(NORTON ROAD, TEYNHAM) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of BT access to clean gullies, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Norton Road, Teynham, between the junctions with A2 London Road and Lewson Street Road, on or after 6 April 2009, for an estimated period of 2 days or until the works are complete. The work is scheduled to be carried out between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, with the road re-opened outside these hours.

The alternative route for through traffic will be: southbound via A2 London Road and Provender Lane; northbound via Lewson Street Road and A2 London Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(HIGHSTED ROAD, SITTINGBOURNE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of highway modifications for a new junction, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Highsted Road, Sittingbourne from the junction with Farm Cresent to the junction with Cromers Road, on or after 23 March 2009, for an estimated period of 7 weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Bell Road, Woodstock Road and Cromers Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(OLD HOCKLEY ROAD, THROWLEY) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because a new electrical supply is being provided, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Old Hockley Road, Throwley for a distance of 400 metres outside Flint Cottage on or after 23 March 2009, for an estimated period of 3 weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Pettfield Hill Road and Church Road.

Highways - District of Thanet

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 - SECTION 116
STOPPING UP OF LAND AT THE SOUTH EASTERN SIDE OF 81 NORTHDOWN PARK ROAD, CLIFTONVILLE, MARGATE

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT the Kent County Council propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Margate Magistrates Court on 23 April 2009 at 9:30am for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary, on land at the south eastern side of 81 Northdown Park Road, Cliftonville, Margate as shown in red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of this notice and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of Kent Highway Services at Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX and at the offices of Thanet District Council, Cecil Street, Margate.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Nicolette Davis of Kent Highway Services either in writing at the address given below, or by telephone on 08458 247 800 (24 hour contact centre) or by email to nikki.davis@kent.gov.uk

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(COLLEGE ROAD, MARGATE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because electrical supply works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on College Road, Margate from outside and opposite Salmestone School on or after 6 April 2009 for an estimated period of 5 days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for each road described in column 1 of the schedule to this order is described in columns 2 and 3 of that schedule.

Alternative route for:	Start via:	Continue via:
Light vehicles	Ramsgate Road to Queens Avenue	Eaton Road, Belgrave Road, Marine Terrace, A28 Canterbury Road Margate,
High sided vehicles (greater than 13ft high)	College Road, St Peters Road and Ramsgate Road to Queens Avenue	George V Avenue and Hartsdown Road. Local access only to Salmestone Rise.

Specified Road	Length of road affected	Alternative route
College Road	Suspension of existing one way traffic order between Tivoli Road and College Road	Local access only

Highways - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(EAST STREET, SNODLAND) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on East Street, rear of 25 Brook Street, Snodland on or after Monday 6th April 2009 for a period of up to 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for westbound traffic via May Street, Brook Street and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

EDF Energy apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to install a new electricity supply, should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Emma Orsborne of Amber Langis Limited on 01474 573831.

Highways - Borough of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(CULVERDEN DOWN, TUNBRIDGE WELLS) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Culverden Down, Tunbridge Wells from the junction of A26 St John's Road to Whitefield Road on or after Monday 6th April 2009 for 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for westbound traffic via A26 St John's Road, Culverden Park Road, Culverden Down and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for highway improvement works. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Sue Laporte on 08458 247 800.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949 AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004

An application has been made to Kent County Council to grant a renewal of an approval for the following premises to act as a venue for the solemnisation of civil marriages and civil partnerships:-

Name of Premises: **Kent International Hotel, Harbour Parade, Ramsgate**
Applicant: **Malcolm Purnell**

The application and plan of the premises may be inspected at the address below during normal office hours. Any person may give notice in writing of an objection to the renewal of the grant of approval, together with the reasons, within 21 days from the date of this newspaper. Objections should be sent to the address below.

Martin Alford, Head of Registration
Regulatory Services, First Floor, Invicta House,
County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX

Kent County Council

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949 AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004
APPROVED PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES & CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

An application has been made to Kent County Council to grant a renewal of an approval for the following premises to act as a venue for the solemnisation of civil marriages and civil partnerships:-

Name of Premises: **Hever Castle, Edenbridge**
Applicant: **Roland Smith**

The application and plan of the premises may be inspected at the address below during normal office hours. Any person may give notice in writing of an objection to the renewal of the grant of approval, together with the reasons, within 21 days from the date of this newspaper. Objections should be sent to the address below.

Martin Alford, Head of Registration
Regulatory Services
First Floor, Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX

Kent County Council

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
THE MARRIAGE ACT 1949 AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004
APPROVED PREMISES FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES & CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

An application has been made to Kent County Council to grant an approval for the following premises to act as a venue for the solemnisation of civil marriages and civil partnerships:-

Name of Premises: **Trinity Theatre, Church Road, Tunbridge Wells**
Applicant: **James Maltby**

The application and plan of the premises may be inspected at the address below during normal office hours. Any person may give notice in writing of an objection to the grant of an approval, together with the reasons, within 21 days from the date of this newspaper. Objections should be sent to the address below.

Martin Alford
Head of Registration
1st Floor, Invicta House
Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX

Kent County Council

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/09/00443/FL – Offham Place Cottages Teston Road Offham West Malling Kent – Mr Stewart Betts is applying for rear first storey extension. Reason: CA

TM/09/00218/FL – 39 - 47 High Street West Malling Kent ME19 6QH – The Trustees Of Malling Abbey Lodge are applying for renovation of existing premises including change of use at second floor level to residential accommodation involving no external fenestration changes. Reason: CA LB

TM/09/00328/FL – Planet Plants (Formerly Coblands Nursery) Back Lane Ightham Sevenoaks Kent TN15 0NY – Mr R McKenna is applying for erection of a replacement agricultural building to provide a potting shed, office and storage areas. Reason: HA DEPART

TM/08/03256/CR4D – Former Mill Stream School Mill Street East Malling West Malling Kent – Mr Steven O'Halloran is applying for proposed redevelopment of the Former Mill Stream Junior School to provide 23 new residential dwellings comprising a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed units together with associated garaging and parking. Reason: DEPART

Reasons for the case being publicised:

LB	Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA	Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
DEPART	Application does not accord with the Development Plan
HA	Site is over 1ha.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Do It Online" and follow the instructions for "Planning Applications" online. You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below).

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 12 April 2009.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
22 March 2009

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

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C3 Picasso heralds new period in mini-MPV art

By **STEVE LOADER**

CITROEN'S Picasso MPV brand sells more than any other family of MPVs in Europe.

This is all the more impressive, since the French marque was a relative latecomer to the sector, launching its first Picasso – the now ageing Xsara version – in 2000.

Nevertheless, it swiftly stole leadership of the UK compact MPV sector created by the original Renault Scenic and Citroën has since added five and seven-seat C4 Picassos and launches the elegantly executed five-door C3 model in April.

It has made a big impression ahead of its debut, capturing Top Gear's 'Family Car of the Year' award, while market watchers at CAP predict it will hold its secondhand value around 10 per cent better than rivals such as the Vauxhall Meriva, Nissan Note, Ford Fusion and Renault Modus.

The unspoken caveat here is: if Citroën does not undermine those values with the sort of keen finance and cashbacks that have given the brand such market strength in the UK lately.

Known Picasso virtues – affordable versatility and space – will be a major strength too and list prices from just £11,495, though the more desirable diesels start at £1,100 higher.

High-efficiency

There are three trim levels: VT, VTR+ and Exclusive and the car will be offered with two high-efficiency low-emission petrol engines – VTi 95 and VTi 120 – developed jointly with BMW and Peugeot and making such a mark with the latest Mini.

But it is likely that the car's two flexible diesel units – the HDi 90 and HDi 110 DPFS – will take most sales.

In its compact cubic and utilitarian way, the C3 Picasso cleverly manages to marry MPV, chunky SUV (4x4) and retro lines into a design that appeals across a wide market.

Many buyers will be sold on versatility alone though: split-folding rear seats that slide back and forth independently and can be folded away in one movement, leaving a flat load bay.

The front passenger seat can also be folded down completely for extra load space within a cabin measuring 1.66m – one of the longest in its class and rivalling those of many MPVs from the next segment up.

The C3 Picasso's 500-litre boot beneath the parcel shelf is one of the biggest in the sector and there is a removable boot floor, which can be positioned at two levels.

The glassy cabin echoes that elsewhere in the Picasso family, but is available with a panoramic roof.

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4x4s on road to redemption Page 65



New Chevy of Epica proportions Pages 68-69

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08 58 KANGOO 1-6 AUTHENTIQUE AUTO PAS INTENSE BLUE 400 MILES £ 9495
08 58 SKODA ROOMSTER 1 AUTO PAS CHAMPAGNE METALLIC 850 MILES £ 8995
08 58 CHEVROLET AVEO LT AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 1900 MILES £ 8995
08 58 SUZUKI SX4 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C ALLOYS BLUE 1800 MILES £ 9995
08 58 NISSAN NOTE ACENTA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 3000 MILES £ 9995
08 58 NEW VAUXHALL AGILA 1-2 DESIGN AUTO BLACK 650 MILES £ 9995
08 58 ASTRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR ULTRA BLUE 2000 MILES £ 8995
08 58 ASTRA 1-8 DESIGN AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR STAR SILVER 2000 MILES ..£10995
08 58 RENAULT CLIO 1-6 EXPRESSION 3DR AUTO PAS 750 MILES £ 9995
08 58 FORD FUSION 1-6 ZETEC CLIMATE MORELLO METALLIC 2000 MILES £ 9995
08 08 PEUGEOT 107 2-TRONIC 5DR AUTO PAS BLACK DELIVERY MILES £ 7695
08 08 NEW ZAFIRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C TURQUOISE 4000 MILES £ 9995
08 08 SKODA ROOMSTER 2 AUTO PAS AIR/C MET GREY 450 MILES £ 9995
08 08 VW POLO 1-4 MATCH 6 SPEED AUTO 5DR AIR BLACK 1000 MILES £ 9995
08 08 VW POLO 1-4 MATCH 6 SPEED AUTO 5DR AIR BLACK 5000 MILES £ 9995
08 08 MATRIX 1-6 GSi PAS AIR/C AUTO SHIMMER BLUE1500 MILES £ 6995
08 08 MICRA ACCENTA PLUS 5 DOOR AUTO BLACK PAS AIR/C 1900 MILES £ 8995
08 08 NEW FOCUS 1-6 STYLE AUTO PAS 5 DR THE NEW BLUE 2000MILES £10495
08 08 FOCUS 1-6 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5 DR ESTATE SILVER 4000MILES £12995
08 08 NEW FOCUS 2-0 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5 DR BLACK 5000MILES £12995
08 08 ASTRA 1-8 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR STAR BLACK 6000 MILES £ 8495
08 08 NEW MODEL MERIVA 1-6 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C BLACK 3000 MILES £ 8995
08 08 NEW MODEL MERIVA 1-6 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C BLUE 1400 MILES £ 8995
08 08 HONDA JAZZ 1-4 SE AUTO PAS AIR/C MET GREY 1800 MILES £10995
08 08 PEUGEOT 207 SE PREMIUM 1-6 AUTO PAS 5DR AIR/C BLACK 999MLS £10995
08 08 PEUGEOT 207 SPORT 1-6 AUTO PAS 5DR AIR/C BLACK 2000 MILES £ 9995
08 57 RENAULT MEGANE 1-6 EXPRESSION 4DR AUTO GREY 9000 MILES £ 7495
08 57 KANGOO 1-6 EXPRESSION AUTO PAS INTENSE BLUE 8000 MILES £ 7995
08 57 NEW FOCUS 1-6 STYLE AUTO PAS 5 DR ESTATE BLUE 10000 MILES £ 9995

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08 08 MEGANE DYNAMIC 1-6 AUTO PAS CONVERTIBLE BLACK 4000 MILES £
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07 57 MICRA 1-6 CONVERTIBLE CC ACENTA AUTO PAS GREY 2000 MILES £10995
07 57 MICRA 1-6 CONVERTIBLE CC ACENTA AUTO PAS BLUE 4000 MILES £10995
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06 56 HYUNDAI 2-0 COUPE SE 3DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 7000 MILES £ 8995
06 56 NISSAN MICRA CONVERTIBLE SPORT AUTO PS AIR GREY 9000 MILES ..£ 9995
06 06 TIGRA EXCLUSIVE 1-4 5 SPEED BLACK LEATHER 14000 MILES £ 9495
02 52 MERC 240 CLK AVANTGARDE AUTO PAS ALLOYS SILVER 8000 MILES £10995

FUSION & FIESTA

07 07 FIESTA 1-6 STYLE CLIMATE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C 5000 MILES £ 7495
07 07 FIESTA 1-4 ZETEC CLIMATE AUTO PAS ALLOYS BLUE 20000 MILES £ 6995
05 05 FUSION 2 1-6 AUTO PAS 5 DR PANTHER BLACK 20000 MILES £ 5495

FORD FOCUS & C-MAX

07 07 FOCUS 1-6 LX ESTATE AUTO PAS AIR/C TONIC BLUE 4000 MILES £ 7995
07 56 FOCUS 1-6 LX 5 DR AUTO PASAIR/C OCEAN BLUE 3000 MILES £ 7495
06 56 FOCUS C-MAX GHIA AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS SILVER 9000 MILES £ 8995
06 56 FOCUS 1-6 ZETEC CLIMATE AUTO PASAIR OCEAN BLUE 8000 MILES £ 7995
06 56 FOCUS 1-6 LX ESTATE AUTO PAS AIR/C STEEL GREY 12000 MILES £ 7995
06 06 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS ESTATE ALLOYS BLUE 14000 MILES £ 7995
06 06 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS 4DOOR ALLOYS SILVER 15000 MILES £ 6995
06 55 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS 4DOOR ALLOYS TONIC BLUE 17000 MILES..£ 6495
06 55 FOCUS 1-6 LX 5 DR AUTO PASAIR/C SEA GREY MET 18000 MILES £ 6495
06 55 FOCUS 1-6 LX 5 DR AUTO PASAIR/C SILVER METALLIC 12000 MILES £ 6495
05 55 FOCUS 2-0 GHIA ESTATE 5DR AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS BLUE 4000 MLS £ 7995
05 55 FOCUS 1-6 ZETEC CLIMATE AUTO PAS AIR/C ALLOYS BLUE 13000MLS £ 6495
04 54 FOCUS 1-6 ZETEC 5DR AUTO PAS ALLOYS ROSSO RED 15000 MILES £ 4995
04 04 FOCUS 2-0 GHIA 5 DR AUTO PAS LEATHER TONIC BLUE 24000 MILES £ 5995
04 53 FOCUS 1-6 LX 5DR AUTO PAS ESTATE CAR SILVER 26000 MILES £ 4995

CORSA

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FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Steve Loader

Polo No5 from VW...



GENERATION Five of VW's enduring Polo is probably the most stylish ever.

Not that it needed to work hard; the VW supermini has often caught the eye and majored on practicality, but never been the most stylish of cars.

Not only will it look good this time but offer the best economy ever in the form of the BlueMotion II – successor to the current Polo BlueMotion – promising road tax-free CO2 emissions of just 87g/km and an average of around 85mpg

This is helped by a new Polo body, bigger and roomier yet weighing 7.5 per cent less than the current car and promising better mpg across the range, whether from VW's perennially effective diesels or its increasingly impressive TSI petrol units, which are lowering emissions and boosting mpg at a time when petrol continues to be markedly cheaper at the pumps than diesel.

Right-hand drive Polos are due here in October.

...and Verso No3 from Toyota



TOYOTA launches its third generation Verso midi-MPV in April, aiming to take more business from the sector-leading Vauxhall Zafira.

Cramming seven seats into a modest yet roomy seven-seat body is literally a tall order, but the new Verso manages it with more style.

It also has a secret weapon this time around with Toyota's new Optimal Drive powertrain technology.

This package of improvements boosts the torque or punch of the engine options by up to 20 per cent yet emissions and economy have also been improved by as much as 12 per cent, while typical family buyers will be pleased that the car rates a maximum NCAP five stars from the off.

The Easy Flat-7 folding flat seat system is now claimed to be easier to operate than before and offers far more boot area behind the third row when upright.

While Patriot's inside job makes it even cheaper





JEEP has clearly listened to repeated complaints about the Achilles Heel in its otherwise clever bargain basement 4x4, the Patriot – poor quality interior design and finishing.

The car has an all-new instrument panel, redesigned centre console, remodelled door trim, carpeted boot floor and premium floor mats plus new sound systems.

Yet prices are even more competitive than before – starting from under £15,000.

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4x4 sector's bid for redemption

by STEVE LOADER





HOW we miss Spitting Image.

That wicked blend of rubber and verbal caricature would have had a field day with our current Government.

Imagine how the show might highlight Labour's persecution of the 4x4, perhaps using a Jurassic Park spoof.

It would probably feature a huge latex Gordon Brown T-Rex snapping at the wheels of a 4x4 hurtling through the streets of Tunbridge Wells, once notorious for having more 4x4s registered than anywhere else in England.

Or maybe we would watch the first horseman of the Apocalypse – our anti-car PM and former Chancellor – driving a 'Taxation' nail into the 4x4 coffin, before the rest of the fearsome quartet turn up as 'Global Warming', 'Volatile Fuel Prices' and 'Global Recession'...just in time to sit on the lid.

Monsters

There can be no argument that the 4x4 sector and its increasingly bloated cars had grown beyond reasonable bounds.

It was actually helped initially by ponderous government that allowed such monsters to thrive in a country where such cross-country/all-weather skills are rarely needed by most drivers; on a visit to icy yet wealthy Norway two winters ago, I was astonished to find 4x4s far less common.

This Government also acted slowly to close a tax loophole that encouraged proliferation of huge 4x4 pick-ups outside of the farming and building trades.

Car companies, of course, were happy to supply demand for beefy 4x4s and we can't blame them – big cars mean big profits, although they actually cost relatively little more to produce than small ones.

No wonder then that the industry is trying to resuscitate all-wheel drive sales.

Toyota, for instance, is bringing a junior version of the highly successful RAV4 to the market soon with a name that recognises how 4x4s stormed the streets and towns of the developed world: the Urban Cruiser 1.4-litre D-4D diesel.

Skoda fancies a shot at the sector too with the all-new Yeti, due in October. The VW-owned Czech marque surprised everyone at the recent Geneva show by announcing that, unlike the newly-launched SUV-lookalike Soul from Kia, the Yeti would be sold in four as well as two-wheel drive format.

And you can understand the sigh of relief at Land Rover after the Government – somewhat ironically – offered a grant of up to £27 million to the UK 4x4 specialist towards production of an all-new compact model.



BACK ON TRACK: Toyota's '4x4 Lite' option – the new Urban Cruiser, Skoda Yeti is to get 4x4 too and the two-wheel drive only Kia Soul marries 4x4 style... and good sense

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Talk about getting more for your money. The Special Edition Captiva ikon is packed with extra spec including side bars/steps, 20" alloys, a shiny chrome exhaust and privacy glass. But, while it looks the part, it will be within your budget as these extras – worth over £3,000 – are absolutely free. On top of that, you also get up to £1,420 off the LS list price. The Special Edition Aveo ikon is packed with extra spec including 15" alloys, a shiny chrome exhaust and privacy glass.

So, that's two great family cars with the looks and reliability you want, but in the budget you've got.
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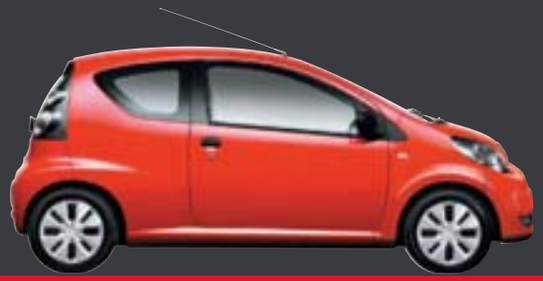
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Vehicles shown feature metallic paint available at extra cost (Aveo £350, Captiva £400). 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost (Aveo £249, Captiva £349). *Savings shown are against man. rec. price of the Aveo 1.2 S or equivalent Captiva LS at time of publication. Available at participating retailers only subject to availability. Not available in connection with any other offers. Prices correct at time of press. Offers apply to models registered before 31st March 2009. (Chev67595)

Official Government Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Aveo 1.2 S 3dr: Urban - 39.2 (7.2), Extra-urban - 61.4 (4.6), Combined - 51.4 (5.5). CO_2 emissions 132g/km. Captiva ikon range: Urban – 23.5 (12.0) to 32.1 (8.8), Extra-urban – 39.8 (7.1) to 45.6 (6.2), Combined – 31.7 (8.9) to 39.2 (7.2). CO_2 emissions 191g/km to 217g/km.

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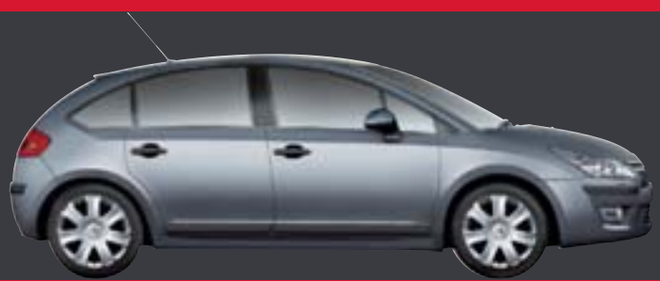
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OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES: URBAN CYCLE, EXTRA URBAN, COMBINED (LITRES PER 100KM/MPG) & CO2 EMISSIONS (G/KM); LOWEST: CITROËN C1 VT 1.0i 12V 68HP 3-DOOR 5.5/51.4, 3.9/72.4, 4.5/62.8, 106. HIGHEST: NEW CITROËN C4 HATCHBACK AIRDREAM+ SPECIAL EDITION 1.6HDi 16V 92HP 5.7/49.6, 3.7/76.3, 4.4/64.2, 117.

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Official fuel consumption in mpg for the Škoda range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) – 53.3 (5.3), Extra Urban 38.2 (7.4) – 83.1 (3.4), Combined 28.0 (10.1) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 Emissions (g/km) Škoda Range: 109 - 235

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*Payable with first payment. **Payable with optional final payment. Further charges maybe payable if vehicle is returned. Offers may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Excludes Channel Islands. Indemnities may be required. Available to over 18s for orders before 31st March 2009 (subject to availability) at participating Retailers only. Subject to status. Škoda Finance, Freepost Škoda Finance. †Extra specification refers to the increased standard equipment level over a Fabia 2. Retail Sales only. Škoda UK warranty valid until 60,000miles or 3 years which comes sooner. 3 years roadside recovery provided by the RAC and includes Europe.

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Model shown is new Octavia Elegance hatch 1.4 TSI 122bhp at £14,960 RRP including optional metallic paint at £400 RRP. **Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the new Octavia Range: Urban 27.4 (10.3) – 44.8 (6.3), Extra-urban 45.6 (6.2) – 67.3 (4.2), Combined 36.7 (7.7) – 57.6 (4.9). CO_2 emissions for the new Octavia Range 130 – 180g/km.** * From only price refers to new Octavia S Hatch 1.4 16v 80bhp.

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Retail cash price	£15,660.00	Option to purchase fee**	£60.00
Amount of credit	£10,962.41	Excess mileage	4.80p per mile
Optional final payment	£5,224.05		

Typical 6.9% APR

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Model shown is New Superb Elegance 1.8 TSI 160bhp at £21,505 RRP including optional metallic paint at £400 RRP. **Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the New Superb Range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) – 43.5 (6.5). Extra-urban 38.2 (7.4) – 67.3 (4.2), Combined 28.0 (10.1) – 55.4 (5.1). CO_2 emissions for the New Superb Range 136 – 235g/km.**

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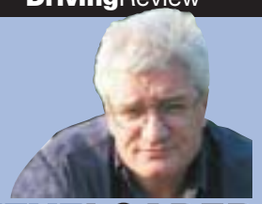
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DrivingReview



by **STEVE LOADER**

CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Chevrolet Epica



HERE'S a car I approached with scepticism.

I expected the Chevrolet Epica to be ugly, ponderous, clumsily finished inside and just, well, a 'Yank Tank'.

OK, it's not perfect in the looks department, but it's not completely awful either and the sums certainly add up.

What's more, this lardy-looking motor is actually built in Korea, where all UK Chevys come from, including the rather likeable Captiva SUV.

The biggest surprise is the handling. Despite 'epic' proportions, the Epica is some way from the classic big Yank 'sedan' or 'divan' that corners like a spongy bedstead.

It can certainly deliver the comfort preferred by the US market, without an excess of the "Jell-O on springs" mobility that Jack Lemmon described while admiring Marilyn Monroe's backside in Some Like it Hot.

In any case, with list prices from just above 14 grand – and local dealers have new cars available for less than 11 – it is wrong to pitch the Chevy against the state-of-the-art Ford Mondeo or the Epica's more upmarket General Motors' stablemate, the Vauxhall Insignia.

Instead, it should be judged and voted tops against other US and Korean rivals such as the Chrysler Sebring and Dodge Avenger and the Kia Magentis and Hyundai Sonata.

The Chevy's most unusual feature is the option of what is said to be a smooth six-cylinder 2.0-litre petrol engine as the entry model, but most buyers will go for the four-pot two-litre diesel.

It is the same impressive Korean-built unit already seen in the Captiva: smooth with the low and mid-range punch needed for this big wagon and yet impressively economical.

The Epica has a big 65-litre tank, but it took so long for the gauge to move off 'full' that I thought it had jammed.

Dave Faulkner, manager of St George's Chevrolet in Cliftonville, Margate, claims some customers had tried to outdo each other

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57 Swift Bolero 680 FB Awning, Aerial, Rev Camera, Fixed Bed, New Cab, Low Line	£1,000	£33,995
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Models for illustration purposes only. These offers replace all previously advertised offers.

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with readings from the on-board computer: "55mpg was the record for a while, but we now have a claim of 64mpg – it's amazing for a big car bench-marked against a Mercedes E-Class for interior space."

He admitted that many Epica customers were taxi operators and the caravan set, rather than image-conscious private buyers and company car executives, but St George's was currently selling more Epicas than any other UK Chevrolet dealer due to healthy private sales too.

By the look of the interior, this is not so surprising either. US brands usually fall short of European and Japanese ones for cabin quality, design and materials, but I was wrong to prejudge the Epica here too.

It is a notch higher than small Chevys on the market and even quite luxurious, though not challenging the executive class of the VW Passat.

The layout is functional and the leather seats on our flagship LT model felt smart and comfortable and rear passengers get acres of space and a sizeable armrest – with cupholders, of course – to lounge against. It is a bit like taking your sofa on the road and only seems to be lacking a drink cabinet.

The seat backs also flop forward to allow long items to be carried, though the boot itself is immense

In Chevy fashion, standard kit is generous: junior LS trim brings air con, cruise control, electric windows all round, alloys, leather covered steering wheel, powered mirrors and MP3 input on the sound system.

My main complaint was the slightly vague five-speed manual gearbox on the diesel test car; I'm assured by Dave Faulkner that the six-speed auto 'box is the better buy – so the Epica is true to its American branding in this respect at least.



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DrivingStats

- Chevrolet Epica LT 2.0VCDi £17,355
- Range: £14,225-test car
- Garage stats: 4.80m by 1.81m four-door saloon
- Powertrain: 1,991cc/148bhp four-cylinder diesel driving front wheels through a five-speed manual gearbox
- Performance: top speed 124mph and 0-62mph in 9.7 seconds
- How green?: category-E (£170/year) road tax - 169g/km CO2 emissions
- Official fuel figures: combined 46.3mpg
- Euro NCAP safety rating (0-5 stars): n/a
- Fuel tank: 65 litres/14.3 gallons
- Insurance group: 9D
- Warranty: three years/60,000 miles.
- Website: www.chevrolet.co.uk
- Rivals: Chrysler Sebring, Citroën C5, Dodge Avenger, Ford Mondeo, Hyundai Sonata, Kia Magentis, Mazda6, Peugeot 407, Renault Laguna, Seat Exeo, Skoda Superb, Toyota Avensis, Vauxhall Insignia and VW Passat.

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Motability

Vehicles shown feature metallic paint available at extra cost (Aveo £350, Captiva £400). 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost (Aveo £249, Captiva £349). *Savings shown are against man. rec. price of the Aveo 1.2 S or equivalent Captiva LS at time of publication. Available at participating retailers only subject to availability. Not available in connection with any other offers. Prices correct at time of press. Offers apply to models registered before 31st March 2009. (Chev68568)

Official Government Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Aveo 1.2 S 3dr: Urban - 39.2 (7.2), Extra-urban - 61.4 (4.6), Combined - 51.4 (5.5). CO_2 emissions 132g/km. Captiva ikon range: Urban – 23.5 (12.0) to 32.1 (8.8), Extra-urban – 39.8 (7.1) to 45.6 (6.2), Combined – 31.7 (8.9) to 39.2 (7.2). CO_2 emissions 191g/km to 217g/km.

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FIESTA, 1.6 Style 5dr Auto [Climate], ey57hkj, adjustable seats, air conditioning, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:7, blue, 6839 miles, £7995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.25 Zetec 5dr [Climate] Sport & Tech Pack, oe08kjn, abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports pack. insurance group:4, black, 13396 miles, £8395, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

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A150, 5 door Classic SE, 2008, polar silver metallic, 4000 miles, £11995, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

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C200 CDI, Elegance, 2008, cubanite silver metallic, 4700 miles, £23000, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

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TF, 1.8 135 16v 2dr, gf04whz, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, immobiliser, head restraints, radio/cassette, power assisted steering, remote locking, sports seats. insurance group:12, silver, 20000 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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COLT, 1.5 DI-D CZ2 5dr Auto *Delivery Miles*, gk58vfe, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, list price, grey, 50 miles, £8795, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

COLT, 1.1 Attivo, gk58vfp, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, passenger airbag, remote locking. blue, 30 miles, £6095, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

COLT, 1.3 CZ2 5dr, gk58vgf, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, radio/cd, power assisted steering, locking wheel nuts, multi function steering wheel,black, 1500 miles, £9395, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

COLT, 1.5 DI-D CZ2 5dr, yt57chj, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric windows, foglights, immobiliser, head restraints, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear headrests. insurance group:5, blue, 5349 miles, £7495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

RENAULT

CLIO, 1.2 16V Dynamique 3dr [AC], gf55gsy, central locking, computer, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, immobiliser, head restraints, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear headrests, remote locking, side airbags, sports seats, sunroof. insurance group:3, silver, 14615 miles, £5495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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FORTWO coupé passion, 2007, lite white, 5900 miles, £6680, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO coupé passion, £8499, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

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Waving, drowning or fighting to stay afloat?

By **TONY PATEY**
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

SHOCKINGLY, one in three South East business owners is using their own savings to keep firms afloat as bankers clutch their cash even harder to their chests, according to a new survey.

Independent invoice financier Bibby Financial Services says it has found that cash is king with the region's businesspeople, with 77 per cent of owners and managers claiming the recession has encouraged them to keep a closer eye on finances.

With seven in 10 firms experiencing a deterioration in their ability to access finance, 23 per cent are cutting their marketing or advertising spending and 30 per cent are even going as far as to use their personal savings to ensure their business doesn't go under.

Also, 23 per cent are scaling back on production and 31 per cent are having to bring services back in-house. Six per cent in the South East – slightly under the seven per cent national average – are getting smaller premises or cutting out office spending altogether and opting to run businesses from home.

The figures also show flexibility is key to survival, with 86 per cent of owners and managers making positive changes specifically in relation to their clients/customers and suppliers.



HARD SELL: But no time for complacency

Just over half have been able to negotiate better terms with suppliers, and nearly two thirds have managed to pursue new business opportunities. In addition, 33 per cent have become more open and transparent when it comes to their business plans with clients and customers alike, resulting in what the firm calls a flexible and more honest breed of business owner and manager.

Kevin Rose, of Bibby Financial Services, said: "Regardless of size or industry sector, this research highlights the flexibility and diversification tactics that businesses are being forced to learn in order to survive.

"With so many businesses taking positive steps to adapt to survive, it is clear that stronger, more experienced entrepreneurs will emerge from these tough times.

"The message to those who are not taking proactive steps is that this is no time to be complacent. Reviewing suppliers, finances and in particular cash flow, even now, may prove vital to the survival of many of the UK's small and medium-sized businesses."

Interestingly, 72 per cent of women are more cautious about their finances compared with 67 per cent of men, and one in three women say they have, or will develop, their understanding of financial management, whereas among male counterparts this figure is just one in five.

And there's also no substitute for experience – more than half of business owners and managers have never experienced a recession or downturn. But it's the bosses who've ridden out past downturns who are more likely to be scrutinising their finances more carefully, with 81 per cent paying more attention to finances compared to just 64 per cent of greenhorns.

Mr Rose said: "Many SMEs will simply be fighting for survival rather than being able to look at what changes are necessary.

"However, even just taking a few minutes a day to look at the business in a fresh light and explore potential new survival strategies could mean the difference between having a successful business in a year's time or not."

Bibby offers help with cash flow funding and says it has recently "secured a significantly enlarged funding facility" and its doors are very much open for business.

'Don't accept sales pitch from banks'

A TUNBRIDGE Wells-based investment specialist is urging people to think more carefully about where their savings are and who is managing their money.

David Brunning is furious that too many people are still being sold investments by their banks because they "don't realise the advice they are being given is far from independent".

He added: "Some banks are in a dreadful state because they haven't been able to manage their own risks, yet they are still asking customers to trust them to manage investments.

"Sadly, the days of having a manager and a bank looking after you personally are long gone. Now everyone from the staff who cash your cheques to the financial advisors have sales targets to meet.

"They are as keen to sell you car loans and pet insurance as they are savings and investments. To a bank, investment management is just another product to sell."

Mr Brunning, of independent financial advisors Brunning Newman Houghton, said people need to decide whether leaving investments to be managed by their bank is sensible when there are other options.

"It's time people stopped accepting the sales pitch and started taking advice," he said.

"How can banks say they can manage customers' investments when they have failed catastrophically with their own? We should be saying 'Hang on a minute – this is silly, because there are alternatives' to the banks and their private client departments."



KOS Media Business

businessforkent.co.uk

CBI says Rates Bill burden will be a tax too far

£800m cost 'at worst possible time'

By **TONY PATEY**
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

BUSINESSES in the county will face a double burden of unwanted extra taxes at the worst possible time if a new Bill is passed by Parliament, the CBI has warned.

The Business Rates Supplements Bill had its Third Reading in the House of Commons this week and will allow councils to levy on companies supplementary taxes designed to pay for infrastructure projects which benefit local economies.

Taxes could total £800 million a year. CBI South East regional director Malcolm Hyde said: "These extra taxes on business could make the difference between companies surviving the downturn or going to the wall.

"They will harm local economies by placing extra financial demands on firms when they can least afford it."

These supplementary taxes would follow the overall five per cent rise in business rates announced by Government, and are set to cost £1.15 billion, which is strongly opposed by business as being too large a rise at a very difficult time, said the CBI. The supplements would particularly affect manufacturers and retailers.



MALCOLM HYDE

The CBI is calling for an urgent amendment to the Bill. It says firms should get a vote to approve or reject proposed tax supplements to pay for new infrastructure projects.

Mr Hyde added: "The Business Rates Supplements Bill is designed to help fund projects that benefit local economies, but may backfire in its present form.

"It risks placing extra burdens on firms that are fighting for survival and could lead to more going bust. It also risks taxing business for projects that are not what local economies need. By amending the Bill to give business a vote, we can ensure local economies get the right investments, which stimulate economic growth and create jobs, instead of threatening them."

He said this would:

- Help avoid white-elephant projects that business does not actually need, saving money and cutting waste;
- Ensure priority is given to the projects that are most likely to help local economies;
- Avoid extra taxes at times when business simply cannot afford them, helping avoid business failures that cost jobs;
- Make the system fair. If only business pays a supplement, business should get a vote;
- Enhance trust and understanding between local government and business, helping local economies.

The CBI is also calling for business rates to be frozen for two years, instead of there being a five per cent rise.

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Finance watchdog raises alarm over mortgage advisor

BRITAIN'S financial watchdog has put out a warning about an advisor operating in Kent who has been linked with a mortgage that apparently didn't get to the borrower.

The Financial Services Authority sent out a statement which said: "Have you arranged a mortgage, remortgage or home purchase plan through The Financial Associate (TFA) Limited, operating from offices at 16 Halfway Street, Sidcup, Kent DA15 8LL?

"We have reason to believe that Mr John Charalambous, the director and advisor, has on at least one occasion applied for a mortgage on behalf of a client.

"The mortgage advance applied for was in excess of the client's requirements and the mortgage advance was not paid to the client.

"At the same time as applying for mortgages for his clients, Mr Charalambous may have applied for life assurance policies without his clients' knowledge or consent."

The FSA said that potentially any customers who took out a mortgage through TFA could be affected.

It advises: "If you took out a mortgage, or are in the process or taking out a mortgage, through TFA you should check that the mortgage advance is for the amount you applied for in your original mortgage application.

"You should also check whether you have received policy statements or correspondence from life insurance companies about life cover that you do not remember applying for.

"We also strongly advise you to contact us: Chris Walmsley – chris.walmsley@fsa.gov.uk or 020 7066 5894; or Joan Bailey – joan.bailey@fsa.gov.uk or 020 7066 1228. Or call our helpline on 0845 606 1234."

KOS Media tried to contact Mr Charalambous but a telephone number given for the address was not recognised.

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IT'S going to be a great day! KOS Media's Travel and Leisure Show at Dover's Cruise Terminal on Sunday, March 29, already has top billing in next week's British Tourism Week, and Dover and Deal MP Gwyn Prosser will be on board on the day. British Tourism Week, whose patron is Prince Charles, is now in its third year. Our show not only has accreditation – it is also prominent on British Tourism Week's website. Liz Hare, KOS Media's events manager, said: "It'll really be a great day out for all the family. Kent has a lot to offer in terms of visitor attractions."

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A short but sustainable guide to going green

A BLIZZARD of information is hitting Kent companies these days, not just from news sources reporting the twists and turns of the recession but also from business organisations and local authorities, ***writes Tony Patey***.

It's all worthwhile because it helps directors and managers get a grip on events and plan accordingly, but it takes time to sift through and they need to put a priority on 'need-to-know' information.

So here I offer a short guide on essential information on how to aim for sustainable business activity. It's high on many firms' agendas because not only does it allow them to do their bit in cutting carbon footprints, it's also an effective marketing tool.

I'd like to thank Deborah Cameron, Kent branch manager of the Institute of Directors, who put it together after we spoke at a breakfast meeting and seminar at Kent Science Park, Sittingbourne. First stop about more information on support available to cut costs, develop green credentials or keep on top of environmental legislation is Business Link on 0845 600 9006 or email on info@businesslinksoutheast.co.uk.

Its service is free to all small and medium-sized companies, and is the contact point if you would like to receive what is called an effergy meter to help reduce energy consumption.

Environmental legislation:

• For a simple guide on what environmental legislation is relevant to your business, click on: Business Link Compliance Tool http://www.businesslink.gov.uk

• For more detailed information on environmental legislation: www.netregs.co.uk

• To find out about registered waste disposal companies and licensed waste carriers: http://ea.wastedirectory.org.uk/

Sustainability and carbon savings:

• How sustainable is your business?: www.businesslinkgov.co.uk/souteast/howsustainable

• Carbon footprinting your business, loans and enhanced capital allowances: http://www.carbontrust.co.uk

Further support for environmental policies and monitoring systems:

•Guidance on writing an environmental policy: www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast/environmentalpolicy

• Envirowise Wizard to guide you: http://www.envirowise.gov.uk/uk/Topics-and-Issues/EMS/Key-Services/EMS-e-publications-wizard.html

Greenwash:

• A great guide by Futerra: http://www.futerra.co.uk/revolution/leading_thinking

Greenwash – a compound of green and whitewash – is a term coined by US activist Jay Westerveld to describe companies putting a spin on products and policies as environmentally friendly, but they're not really.

Gloves are off in redundancy payments row

By **TONY PATEY**
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

OK, HERE'S the fight. In the blue corner is Erith and Thamesmead MP John Austin, and in the red corner is the Forum of Private Business.

Title? Whether redundancy payments should go up or not – and the gloves are off.

Mr Austin and Parliamentary Labour Party colleagues have called on the Government to cut out the current cap on statutory redundancy pay and uprate the level by linking it to average weekly earnings.

Mr Austin said: "In the economic downturn and with more people possibly facing redundancy, it is vital that we work to ensure our statutory redundancy pay packages are linked to people's earnings and offer real support to those who through no fault of their own lose their jobs."

"We need to remember there will be victims in recession and however much we may want to, we cannot guarantee every worker's job."

But the forum said increasing redundancy payouts could backfire on small businesses, forcing them to close rather than attempting to recover and grow, adding to unemployment and leaving the taxpayer to pick up the bill.

"The proposal, apparently to protect workers, is misguided because it would increase unemployment by forcing many businesses to close that might have survived had statutory redundancy pay been left alone," said chief executive, Phil Orford.

"Inevitably, this would also increase the burden of social security on the taxpayer and become a downward spiral of further unemployment and economic deterioration.

"Should this become law, the increased costs of having to make staff cuts would make it much more difficult for a business owner to turn a struggling company around.

"Many businesses would be left with no alternative to closing completely, leading to a further loss of jobs. The Government would be left to pay the additional redundancy costs out of the public purse."

Mr Orford added: "At present, small businesses are struggling to find innovative ways to cut costs yet keep hold of their valued, skilled staff.

"The last resort is to have to make redundancies. Increasing redundancy pay would be a further blow to their chances of surviving and a serious impediment to growth."

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Alex finds his niche despite downturn

IT'S RECESSION time, firms are finding it tough, but there are some Kent businesspeople out there still making a good fist of it. Like Alex Paterson (pictured).



He's successful in what he does, and thinking of taking on staff. Not bad for a young man who wanted to go it alone and asked a special programme which helps disabled and disadvantaged people do just that.

Mr Paterson, 34, from Deal, originally trained in aerospace design and engineering at Kingston University.

He had to temporarily leave the course before graduating due to illness.

He resumed his studies after being given the right treatment, and started working for a local Kent council on a contract basis once he had recovered.

However, with the contract at an end, he found himself out of work. With few suitable options available, Mr Paterson went to the job centre and discovered information on schemes to start a business.

He was referred to the self-employment team at Enham, a leading regional charity dedicated to providing services for people with disabilities, and their business ability programme, a free and confidential service.

"I saw a niche to deliver architectural design, planning and building control applications, site surveys and engineering services to contractors in Kent and London," he said.

"I've also diversified by offering energy consultations for homeowners as well as businesses, providing independent and impartial advice for those wishing to reduce their energy costs and become more fuel efficient.

"It was a risk setting up on my own, but I've kept my costs down by working from home. I also worked as a part-time lecturer at the University of Greenwich."

He was the programme's 1000th client, and 18 months on and his firm AP Design Consultancy is doing well.

SITTINGBOURNE-based Demelza Hospice Care for Children hosted its annual business awards at the Marriott Tudor Park, near Maidstone, rewarding companies which have supported it over the last 12 months. The event was sponsored by Spirit Circuits.

Winners were: Outstanding Individual Fundraising: Marie Thomas (RBS); Outstanding Fundraising Team: DCB Kent; Most Innovative Fundraising Idea: ANZ Bank; Outstanding Voluntary Project: RBS; Outstanding SME Supporter: SearchFlow; Outstanding Corporate Supporter: Sainsbury's; Outstanding Long-Term Supporter: Harmworth Quays Printing.

Demelza relies heavily on corporate support, and businesses can help the charity through a range of initiatives from cause-related marketing to staff fundraising and from donations to volunteering.



KOS Media Business

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Accord champions the cause of the little guy



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Small businesses are very much in the spotlight these days, especially in Kent where the vast majority of firms are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). They are under the cosh as much as the big companies, but don't have the massive backroom staff.

So organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) are vital to keeping them informed and protected. Last week saw the national launch in Canterbury of a new agreement to include small businesses in local council decision-making. Its 14 Accord Principles include nominating what it calls 'business engagement champions' from among business communities and within councils, as well as encouraging greater consultation. At the signing of the first accord in the country, FSB policy chairman **John Walker** was joined by the leader of Canterbury City Council, Cllr John Gilbey, and chief executive Colin Carmichael, as well as county FSB officials. The accord is the next step of the FSB's Keep Trade Local campaign, highlighting the need to preserve local services and networks such as pubs, post offices and banks to help small businesses survive.

The launch was in the week when news came out that UK SMEs are now owed a massive £25.9 billion after overdue payments rocketed by almost 40 per cent during the last year, up sharply from £18.6bn. Never was the FSB needed more.

Mr Walker talked to KOS Media business editor Tony Patey.

Q ***Why is the new accord needed?***

A During this recession, it's absolutely crucial local authorities proactively seek the views of small businesses and listen to their needs, so they can provide the support they need to get through these tough times.

In every area where a local authority has signed the accord, small businesses will be able to put their views and concerns directly to decision-makers.

Many of the concerns are derived from activities carried out by local councils and there has been an increasing trend over the years for our organisation to be involved and keep contact going. We are calling upon councils to have more consultation with the business community.

Q ***The first is in Canterbury, where will the rest be?***

A We will be rolling it out across the country, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We have been running our Keep Trade Local campaign for a year now and we're trying to get members and the public going to local traders and professional people rather than further afield. That has certainly taken off.

Q ***Why is it so important to protect SMEs?***

A More than a half the country's economy is derived from SMEs, so the importance of them is often not fully realised, certainly in Whitehall. Also, some people actually risk the family home to set up in business and provide employment for others, and that factor is often not appreciated. It is often not recognised by Government, particularly when setting regulations.

Q ***What is your business background?***

A I started out in the early 1970s in a clearing bank, and in the 90s I was in financial services. Most of my time now is taken up with being the FSB policy chairman, which is extremely time-consuming. This week I've been in Blackpool with internal meetings, today Canterbury, tomorrow the London office to attend a meeting of all the policy managers, and next week is our national conference. I've been policy chairman since 2001 and the appointment comes up every year.

Q ***Do you intend to run again? And what's your policy towards the recession?***

A Yes, I intend running again this year. On the recession we've conducted ourselves in such a way that we're not talking down the UK economy.

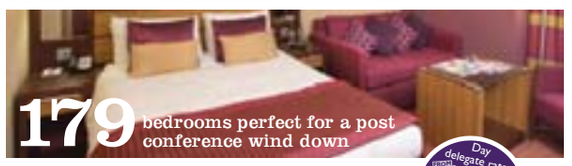
We're certainly realistic about the challenges and difficulties, but are trying to put forward ideas to help make life easier for members rather than just moan about the situation.

Q ***What feedback are you getting about the Government's £1.3bn enterprise loans scheme?***

A We pushed for that, as you know, but there are some blockages in the system. Feedback from members is that some local bank branches are certainly aware of it but they try and make the paper chase too challenging.

The main message I would like to get across to clearing banks is: please help our members, process those applications for them.

Also, generally, no more business regulation for the time being unless it's a matter of public safety.



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'UK should grasp this EU lifeline on repairs'



TIME TO ACT: The Government is being urged to cut VAT on repairs

THE Government should act on an EU move to cut VAT on repair and maintenance bills that will benefit historic buildings, says property consultancy Knight Frank, ***writes Tony Patey***.

The EU has given the go-ahead for member states to cut the rate of VAT on property repairs and maintenance to five per cent from its current level of 15 per cent. A VAT cut would be beneficial to historic buildings, says Knight Frank, especially those that are listed, because repairs are regulated and can be very expensive.

It will partially reverse the anomaly that alterations, compared with repairs and maintenance, to listed buildings have been zero-rated for many years. Knight Frank says it will help maintain the fabric of the UK's historic buildings and provide a lifeline to the construction industry in the economic downturn. Andy Waller, head of building consultancy at Knight Frank, said: "The EU's decision is very welcome and I would urge the Government to take advantage as quickly as possible.

"Not only will it help preserve the nation's historic buildings, but it could offer a much-needed boost to the construction industry in difficult economic times.

"Repairing historic buildings is notoriously expensive and bills can run to hundreds of thousands of pounds. Cutting the rate of VAT by 10 per cent will therefore make a big difference.

"Some conservation bodies have long considered it an anomaly that alterations to listed buildings have been zero-rated, while repair and maintenance bills have attracted VAT at 15 per cent.

"I think conservation organisations will be happy at this partial redress of the imbalance between rating on alterations and repairs – if the Government decides to implement the cut.

"Our clients and all owners of listed houses would also be pleased that their, mostly unheralded, efforts to keep our architectural heritage in order will be assisted and acknowledged in this small way."

Cornucopia of online attractions

POPULAR tourist attraction the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale Farm at Faversham has joined Visit Kent, the county's official tourism website.

The collection is part of an international programme to protect genetic resources for the future and home to the largest fruit collection in the world, with nearly 4,000 fruit trees and plants including apples, pears, plums, cherries, bush fruit, vines and cob nuts.

Another new member of Visit Kent is the historic award-winning White Cliffs Hotel near Dover, a traditional Kentish weatherboarded inn that has its origins in Elizabethan times in St Margaret's at Cliffe.

Owner Gavin Oakley, who also masterminded nearby award-winning Wallett's Court Country House Hotel, said: "Being the closest hotel on mainland Britain to the Continent puts White Cliffs at the vanguard of the high-quality tourism being offered in this corner of the country."

MORTGAGE RATES

RT: Rate type **R%:** Rate percentage **L:** Loan **U:** Until **OD:** Other details

FIXED

PRICIPALITY
RT: FIXED **R%:** 4.74% **L:** 75% **U:** 31/03/2012
OD: £1,339

FIRST ACTIVE RBS
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.89% **L:** 75% **U:** 30/06/2011
OD: £1,029

WOOLWICH
RT: FIXED **R%:** 4.69% **L:** 70% **U:** 30/04/2011
OD: £1,030

MARSDEN
RT: FIXED **R%:** 4.19% **L:** 75% **U:** 29/02/2012
OD: £1,024

OTHER

ALLIANCE & LEICESTER
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 2.99% **L:** 75% **U:** 2 YEARS
OD: £2,310

ABBEY
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 3.39% **L:** 75% **U:** 3 YEARS
OD: £1,255

MARSDEN
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 3.25% **L:** 75% **U:** 28/02/2011
OD: £924

NATIONWIDE
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 3.28% **L:** 75% **U:** 3 YEARS
OD: £1,015

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MALE AGED 25	
LEGAL & GENERAL	£7.55
N UNION (SIMPLIFIED)	£7.83
NORWICH UNION	£8.30
AXA	£8.33
SCOTTISH PRVDNT	£8.35
LV=	£8.47
FRIENDS PRVDNT	£8.4

FEMALE AGED 25	
NORWICH UNION	£6.17
LEGAL & GENERAL	£6.20
LV=	£6.33
FRIENDS PRVDNT	£7.01
NORWICH UNION	£7.10
AXA	£7.10
AEGON SCOT EQ	£7.15

MALE AGED 40	
BRIGHT GREY	£17.80
ZURICH	£17.95
NORWICH UNION	£18.05
AEGON SCOT EQ	£18.25
NORWICH UNION	£18.28
LEGAL & GENERAL	£18.65
FRIENDS PRVDNT	£18.66

FEMALE AGED 40	
BRIGHT GREY	£14.58
NORWICH UNION	£14.60
ZURICH	£14.65
NORWICH UNION	£14.66
LEGAL & GENERAL	£14.90
AEGON SCOT EQ	£14.92
SCOT PRVDNT	£14.95

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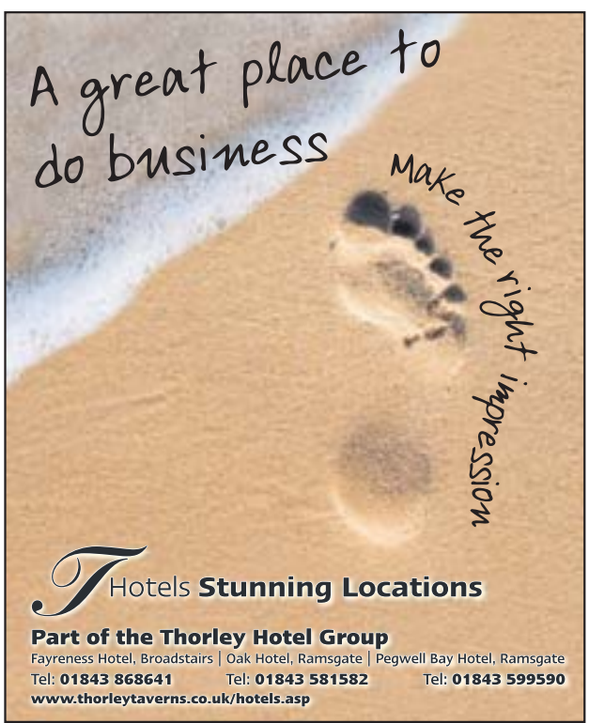


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Picture: TOM HOWARD



Baas wow Heath fans

Stars serve up a thriller at club centenary

By **TOM HOWARD**

A BREATHTAKING exhibition match against the world-famous Barbarians capped off Blackheath Rugby Club's 150-year anniversary in style.

A bumper crowd of about 3,000 turned out at Rectory Field on Wednesday night to witness Blackheath play against a Barbarians side that included former Scotland international Gordon Bulloch and Wales 2005 Six Nations winner Kevin Morgan.

Blackheath, who were formed in 1858, are the oldest open rugby club in the world and the game was the final major event of 12 months of celebrations, which began with the first team touring Argentina.

This week's game was befitting for the occasion, producing 16 tries in total and at times some stunning attacking rugby.

Blackheath briefly took the lead in the first half, but the Barbarians showed their class in the second half by scoring four tries compared to Blackheath's three. The Baas Baas edged the game with the final score at 57-45.

Blackheath team manager Yusuf Ibrahim felt the game was a perfect way to celebrate the 150th anniversary and was impressed by how his side dealt with the Barbarians.

He said: "It was a great advert for the game of rugby and to celebrate our 150-year anniversary. The Baas Baas played in their traditional spirit and our boys upped their game and it was a great encounter.

"It was great to pit your wits against a team with such history. I think our players lifted themselves for the game and acquitted themselves well. We were in the game right to the final whistle.

"It was a fantastic way to celebrate and it is not over yet. There are lots of things going on. It all started with a tour to Argentina which was a memorable experience. It has been a joy to be a part of it."

After mixing it with world rugby stars on Wednesday, Blackheath returned to National League 2 action at Blaydon yesterday. Ibrahim hopes his players will continue their form after such a closely fought game against a team of professional players.

He added: "We are very excited about the remainder of the season. If we can play like we have been in the last few weeks then it will be interesting."

• ***For highlights of the game log onto www.yourkenttv.co.uk.***

Conway's last test before Indy bow



MIKE Conway will complete his final Indy Racing League test this weekend as he prepares to challenge the world's best oval-course racers next month.

The Sevenoaks driver will take part in a three-day test at Barber Motorsports Park in Alabama, with the Dreyer & Reinbold Racing team, after agreeing a deal to move to the American series in January.

The test will give Conway three days of precious track time as he bids to familiarise himself with a brand-new car and racing style before the season opener in April.

Conway has already showed his skill and intentions by shocking the Indy Racing League paddock with his pace at last month's test in Miami.

The 24-year-old clocked a time which was good enough for eighth place in his first-ever drive on an oval circuit. His time was quicker than seasoned professionals such as Danica Patrick and former champion Dario Franchitti.

Although being daunted by racing at an average speed of more than 210mph, Conway is beginning to warm to racing on ovals.

He is also likely to be confident about his debut as the opening round will take place on the street circuit at the Honda Grand Prix in St Petersburg on April 5.



NEW BASE: Teams have united to form the Kent Baseball Club for the county

Clubs pitch in to create new baseball team

THE county's aspiring baseball players are set to benefit from the formation of the Kent Baseball Club.

The newly-formed club has united the Tonbridge Bobcats youth side with the Medway Mariners adult side to provide one club to cater for players of all ages.

The Mariners finished third in the British AA South League last season and have produced five players who are involved with the Great Britain Academy side.

The Bobcats have had equal success in the county, but only cater for players up to the age of 16.

Benefit

Mariners' general manager Simon Canter believes the formation of a new club will help keep young aspiring players interested in the game.

He said: "I think the joining of the two clubs will definitely be a benefit to the sport in the county.

"We were finding that once the junior players became too old for the Bobcats team they were dropping out of the sport and those that were carrying on were joining clubs in London.

"With the new Kent Baseball Club we hope to provide a logical step for the youth players into the adult team."

Despite baseball not being as popular as mainstream sports such as football, cricket and rugby, Canter claims interest is growing in the county.

He added: "We have people come to play from all over county as far as Deal. I believe we have around 50 players all together and it is growing. I think we would have more if the sport had not been dropped from the London Olympics for 2012."

• ***If you are interested in playing baseball, you can find out more by logging on to www.kentbaseballclub.co.uk.***



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Picture: PA PHOTOS



SUCCESS: Skipper Charlotte Edwards

World Cup win to top the Lotte

CHARLOTTE Edwards feels lifting the ICC Women's World Cup would be her biggest achievement in an already hugely successful career.

The Kent and England skipper led her side out in the final against New Zealand in the early hours of Sunday morning, hoping to build on back-to-back Ashes series wins and having been named ICC Women's Player of the Year in 2008.

The 29-year-old helped her side beat the Kiwis earlier in the competition by scoring a half century and taking four wickets and feels that will have given her team some confidence.

She told Kent on Sunday: "The New Zealand game was a big game for us so it was good to have performed well in that one. Up until then I hadn't really had a great deal to do. I'm hoping my experience will really tell on the big stage of a final.

"I'm taking some cheeky wickets at the moment and if I'm doing that, it's an added bonus really.

"We don't really fear anyone at the moment. We are playing some good cricket but while some individuals have done well in games I don't think we have properly clicked as a team in this tournament yet."

Fellow Kent team-mate, Lydia Greenway, has chipped in with some valuable runs in the middle order for England and Edwards expects her to lead the way in the field.

Opportunities

"Lydia has fielded really well and without doubt has been the best fielder in the tournament," she said. "She has probably not hit her straps batting just yet, but has had limited opportunities. This team has been together for about two or three years and Lydia is a massive part of that and she sets the standard for us all in the field.

"She is definitely one to watch."

The final is just stage one of England's plans to be the dominant force in women's cricket, as they look to retain the Ashes this summer before the showpiece ICC Women's Twenty20 World Cup in this country in June.

For Edwards, the World Cup is the one that has so far eluded her.

She said: "It is going to be the biggest game of my career by far. I have played in Ashes series but this will really be up there, certainly the biggest in my career so far. We are all very excited about playing in a final, it's something you dream of and having played in three semi-finals, it's a great feeling to have made the final."

• ***Visit www.kentnews.co.uk for the result and reaction from Down Under.***

Clark signing could be final one for Kent

By **GLENN PEARSON**

KENT have no plans to replace incoming overseas fast bowler Stuart Clark when his six-week contract ends in June.

The county announced the signing of the Australian at the club's AGM this week, as predicted by this newspaper, for the first six weeks of the summer.

However, as a result of the delay to the £10 million redevelopment of St Lawrence and the county's disappointing financial results, the club will wait until June before deciding whether a new overseas player is to replace Clark for the second half of the season.

Short-sighted

Kent have this week been criticised for signing the Australian, in what is an Ashes year, with the ECB's managing director Hugh Morris, selector Geoff Miller and skipper Andrew Strauss all vociferous in condemnation.

Strauss described the signing as "short-sighted" while others, including former captain Alec Stewart, have complained that Kent are giving an Australian Test bowler the chance to prove his form and fitness ahead of the series.

The club have defended their corner, with chief executive Paul Millman pointing towards the potential loss of Amjad Khan to England and the fact three other Kent players are on the cusp of international honours.

He told Kent on Sunday: "We can't be accused of not supporting England, we have Amjad Khan in the England squad, Robbie Joseph, Rob Key and Joe Denly.

"That's four in contention for England honours and that's as many if not more than any other county.

"Seven or eight years ago we had Steve Waugh for a month and that attracted a certain amount of soul searching at the time, but at the end of that month there was nobody in Kent saying it was a bad thing.

"I don't think Steve Waugh's month at Kent made a blind bit of difference to the Ashes and I don't think Stuart Clark's six weeks here will either."

Millman admitted he was surprised at the level of criticism to have been directed at the club.

With all-rounder Ryan McLaren set to spend the first few weeks of the season in the Indian Premier League, and Khan potentially out of the picture, the county were in need of bowling cover.

"We have got to look after Kent as well as England, it's a parallel exercise," he said. "Of course England is important and of course we want to win the Ashes, and we wouldn't want to do anything to stop that. Equally we have a very large group of supporters who want to see success for Kent cricket.

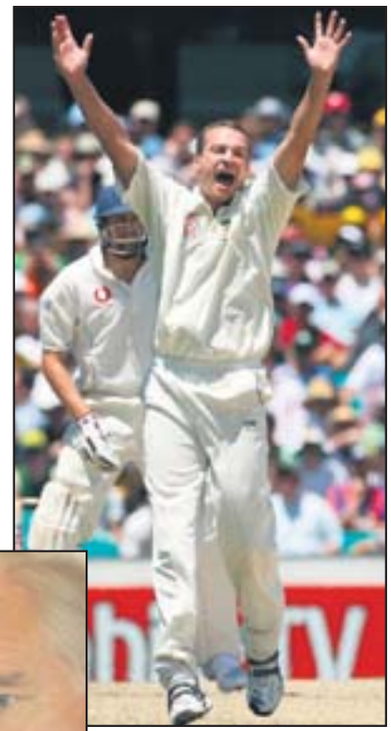
"I do think it's an over reaction and I am surprised at the quarters it's come from."

The county also announced at its AGM that there have been discussions with contractors to pick up the work on the redevelopment at the ground.

Millman told KoS the club were committed to the redevelopment and the plans originally submitted.

He said: "We have had positive discussions with a number of positive parties and we are carrying on those conversations.

"The plans submitted are for a ground for which everybody supporting Kent cricket can be proud and give us a shout of going ahead and stage the best possible cricket and international cricket."



Picture: PA PHOTOS



UNDER FIRE: Paul Millman (inset) has defended Kent's decision to sign Aussie Stuart Clark, saying Kent have Amjad Khan in the England squad and three players on the cusp of playing in at international level

Bay in Europe dilemma

HERNE Bay United produced arguably their best-ever result in roller hockey's European League last weekend, but financial concerns may prevent the club from entering the elite competition next season.

The strictly amateur English champions gave professional Spanish giants Reus Deportiu a fright last Saturday before eventually slipping to a 7-4 defeat.

The result represented a giant leap forward for the club, which has often struggled in the competition against the Continent's best club sides.

United are on course to retain their domestic Premier League title, making them eligible for a third successive European League campaign, but player/coach Phil McVey admits the club's progress could be undermined if they are unable to raise the £14,000 needed to cover costs.

He said: "The first year raising the money was hard, this year it's been harder and in the current climate it could be very difficult. Potentially all the good work we've put in could be undone.

"While we have generated a lot of interest you need to keep pushing to get that snowball effect and narrow the gap. As soon as we take our eye off the ball it will unravel."

One alternative to keep United in Europe would be to enter the less prestigious but more cost-effective CERS Cup.

If this fails the club are looking to stage a tournament next year to celebrate their centenary.

Picture: MARK BOTTING



COSTS: Financial climate could stop Bay competing in Europe



GUEST: Legendary Murray Walker will be on the mic at Lydd

Murray mint for Lydd

THE voice of motorsport, Murray Walker, will return to the commentary box at Lydden Hill for the opening round of the European Rallycross Championship next month.

The legendary broadcaster will be at the Kent circuit to commentate on European Rallycross Championship's return after a 16-year absence.

Walker, who was the voice of Formula One for 52 years and rallycross during the 1970s and 1980s, is eager to visit the circuit again.

He said: "I'm really looking forward to being back at Lydden to get involved with the commentary at the European Rallycross meeting on Easter Monday.

"Rallycross is the greatest of fun and one of the most exciting and dramatic forms of motorsport that there is – and, yes, I do include Formula One in that viewpoint."

With three weeks remaining before the event, Lydden has been inundated with entries, with more than 20 supercars already signed up, including reigning European champion Kenneth Hanson.

The event will take place on April 12-13.

Coach's call still rankles for Mel

Veteran won't give in despite being dropped from squad

MEL Clewlow will continue to make herself available for international selection despite being excluded from the latest funding squad, ***writes David Pritchard.***

The Canterbury ladies defender is Great Britain's most experienced player, passing 250 international caps at the Beijing Olympics last summer. The 32-year-old considered her international future last autumn before deciding she wanted to carry on, although she stopped short of being able to guarantee her fitness as far ahead as the London Olympics.

The chances of Clewlow adding to her record number of appearances have now receded after she was left out of the 32-strong squad to get central funding. Although two months have passed since finding out the news from coach Danny Kerry, the decision still rankles.

"I'm annoyed, frustrated, angry – you name it, it's been an emotional rollercoaster," she told Kent on Sunday. "I don't agree with the reasons I was given but I can't do anything about it, it's the coach's call.

"I could take the option to say 'that's it, I'm retiring' and be bitter and twisted about my whole career but then that shuts the door completely. The hardest thing is it's taken away the opportunity for me to help develop the younger players, which is why I don't understand the decision."

Kerry, who coached Canterbury ladies before taking over the Great Britain job four years ago, said he understood the reaction but his priority was building a squad for London 2012.

He said: "It's come as a bitter disappointment for Mel, as it would for any player. That's really me looking to London in particular. It's going to be difficult for Mel to break back in but it's not my job to shut the door, it's players' jobs to decide if they want to retire."

Kerry has high hopes for London

GREAT Britain women's hockey coach Danny Kerry is optimistic about his side performing well at London 2012 thanks to an increase in funding from UK Sport.

After both the men's and women's teams exceeded their targets at Beijing with fifth and sixth places respectively, the sport was awarded a 43 per cent increase in central investment up to 2012.

Kerry will look to use the money to buy players' time away from work or study to build a strong team ethic ahead of the Games. He used a similar tactic before Beijing, but with the new funding levels it will be on a much larger scale as Britain looks for its first Olympic hockey medal since 1992.



Picture: PA PHOTOS

OPTIMISTIC: Danny Kerry

He said: "We're looking to get the team together as much as humanly possible. Rather than the 12 months we had ahead of Beijing we are looking to do that for three-and-a-half years.

"Some players have got some tough life choices to make but sports like cycling and sailing made them 12 years ago because they had the funding.

"Now because of our performances in Beijing we have the opportunity to do that."



WORLD CLASS: Artist's impression of the new clay pigeon site in Dartford (and below)

Club still gunning for new shooting range despite 2012 set back

DARTFORD Clay Shooting Club (DCSC) will continue with their ambitious plans to create a world-class venue despite missing out on hosting the Olympic tournament.

The club are hoping to submit a planning application to Dartford Borough Council in the next few weeks. When built, the £20 million scheme would enable the club to become the premier shooting facility in the country, capable of bringing top international competitions to the UK for the first time.

It was hoped the plans would convince London 2012 organisers to switch the Olympic shooting competition to the Kent club.

Woolwich was the original venue chosen, but with the £42 million venue to be demolished after the Games it had drawn criticism for not leaving a lasting legacy.

This week the debate was settled with organisers confirming Woolwich would remain the host venue, to the bitter disappointment of everyone at the DCSC.

Richard Bailey, spokesman for the DCSC, said: "We can only stand open-mouthed in astonishment at the decision. At Dartford we could have built a legacy for shooting for the original £25m budget.

"The bottom line is the application to build an international quality venue that will attract huge inward investment will continue unchanged."

The plans would create a new shooting range and indoor facilities which are intended to be made available for the community on the site at the Dartford Marshes. It is predicted the project would take around 12 months to complete once planning permission is given.



'Let's hear your Royce'

GILLINGHAM'S experienced players need to stand up and contribute more verbally in the crucial final weeks of the season, according to manager Mark Stimson.

Going into yesterday's game at Grimsby, Gills were second in League Two with eight games remaining. Although it was the highest they had been all season, several difficult games remain and they face trips to rivals Brentford, Wycombe and Rochdale to come in the next six weeks.

Raw

Gills have a young and fairly raw squad, with just four players – Simon Royce, Nicky Southall, Mark Bentley and Mark McCammon – aged over 30. None of the quartet are renowned for having a lot to say, but Stimson urged them to play more of a role as the season reaches its climax.

He said: "Normally your experienced players are the ones who get around people and are really vocal in the dressing room and out on the pitch. Those three are not, if I'm honest.

"You would like your senior players to do that and nine times out of 10 that's what the old players do. Mark Bentley won promotions at Southend but I don't think he would've been one of the noisier ones in the changing room. He must have experienced it and now he's got to pass some of that on to our younger players."

Elsewhere, Gillingham striker Luis Cumbers will be offered a new contract this summer. The 20-year-old striker was loaned out to Ebbsfleet United last week, a move which appeared to indicate his days at Priestfield were numbered.

Injury problems have plagued Cumbers this season, restricting him to seven first-team appearances, but Stimson does not want to lose the talented forward.

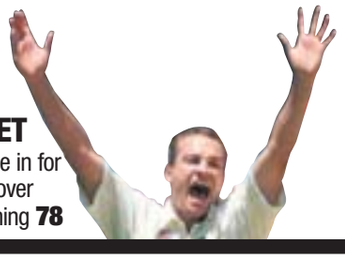
He said: "Luis is fine, I've told him he's got nothing to worry about for next year, just go and get some minutes and goals if you can, like Andy Pugh has [on loan at Grays] and then come back and be sharp in case he's needed for the next few games."



Picture: KEITH SLATER

SPEAK UP: Gills boss Mark Stimson wants more input from senior players like Simon Royce

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'GROW UP'

FA chief slams attitude of Premiership bosses



Pictures: IGOR KUPCO



BAD ATTITUDES: Lord Triesman (above) says that some top managers need to learn restraint, and (left) Kent FA chief Barry Bright, who has announced plans to launch acadamies for referees in Kent

EXCLUSIVE

By **GLENN PEARSON**

ENGLISH football's most powerful figure has voiced his concerns about the behaviour of some of the Premier League's top managers.

Lord Triesman, the chairman of the Football Association, was speaking at a conference held by the Kent County FA this week where he was pressed about the influence of the Premiership on the grassroots game.

In a week where the tension boiled over between Hull manager Phil Brown and Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger, the FA's top man expressed his growing concerns.

He said: "What worries me is the attitude of some senior managers, they seem to show no restraint. Some of them are looked up to by young people and they often imitate what they do. A discussion with the League Managers' Association is ongoing and I have to say there will have to be some significant strides made soon as a result of what's happening this season."

Lord Triesman also said the majority of top referees in England had reported an improvement in relations with players as a result of the Respect programme.

He also said the programme, launched in Kent in December, 2007, before anywhere else in the country, has to be adhered to at all levels if it is to work effectively.

Respect

He told Kent on Sunday: "When you are running a programme like Respect you have to do it all levels and if it's done at just one level, it will not work.

"The events seen on Match of the Day are often played out on a Sunday morning, so what happens at the top of the game is profoundly important for what happens at the bottom.

"There are some bad things at the bottom that are distinctive and important – parents screaming at referees in games involving their kids. Youngsters don't only imitate television, they imitate their dad or their mum. We have to make the effort at all the levels."

The FA chief, who is leading England's World Cup 2018 bid, praised the KCFA for their work at grassroots level at the meeting held on Wednesday night at the Kent Police College in Maidstone.

The conference was held as an update for members on the KCFA's five-year strategy which includes addressing pitches and facilities, respect in the game, leadership and governance and development and support.

Lord Triesman said a number of other counties across the country are looking to adopt a similar approach to the blueprint launched by Kent 15 months ago.

He told KoS: "I think the real strength of the Kent FA is that they go through a thorough process which produces results, and that's all I'm really interested in.

"I know a lot of people in football who think that it's okay as long as you can write a good plan and that's where it stops, but that's not where it stops in Kent.

"There are one or two other counties that have a similar approach, but what I see is people look at the counties that work and see what they can learn."

KCFA chairman Barry Bright, who is also vice-chairman of the FA, revealed the association is hoping to launch academies for referees and coaches in the county.

"We are advanced in our thoughts of a referee's academy for the county," he said. "The coaching academy is very much at an early stage as that's been brought forward by the strategy board to run alongside our existing coaching.

"But at the moment, I need £1 million to build a KCFA headquarters and we're confident that will go ahead now.

"The referees' academy is well advanced but still need more finance so the coaching academy comes number three in the list, but I think it will happen.

"No other association in the country has a coaching academy so Kent would be leaders once again."

Hoy injury fails to put a dent in Staff confidence

JAMIE Staff is unfazed at being the focal point of Great Britain's Track Cycling Championship team, after triple gold medallist Chris Hoy pulled out of the squad through injury.

The Olympic champion, from Ashford, was named in the Great Britain Team Sprint squad on Monday and will be joined by Beijing Team Sprint team-mate Jason Kenny and Hoy's replacement, Matt Crompton.

The 35-year-old will be the team's most experienced rider at the World Championships in Pruszkow, Poland, next week, and it is something he is looking forward to.

He told Kent on Sunday: "I don't feel there is any more pressure on me. I have been the oldest in the squad for a number of years and I have always made it part of my job to help bring on the youngsters."

Tough

France won the Team Sprint world title last year in Manchester and Staff admits the gold medal will be tough, especially without the injured Hoy, in what he describes an "unpredictable championship".

He said: "The Olympics is the pinnacle of the sport, but the World Championships in Track Cycling is certainly up there. To win the world title is most definitely the aim.

The Great Britain cycling team picked up 14 Olympic medals at Beijing last summer, but Staff is not expecting a repeat next week.

He added: "There is going to be a lot more attention from the media on us going into the event, but we are not expecting to dominate like we did in Beijing. It is a transitional period and it has been a long season for us, but there is no reason why we cannot have a medal haul."

Staff will begin his World Championship assault in the Team Sprint qualifying round on Wednesday.



TITLE HOPES: Jamie Staff and Team GB go for gold in the World Championship Team Sprint Picture: PA PHOTOS

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